Building a New Kashmir: Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad and the Politics of State-Formation in a Disputed Territory (1953-1963)

by

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Table of Contents

Abstract

This dissertation is a historical study of the early postcolonial period in the Indian-administered state of Jammu and Kashmir (1953-63). It traces the trajectory of "Naya [New] Kashmir," a leftist manifesto of the National Conference (NC). The NC was a secular nationalist Kashmiri political party that came to power in the state in 1947, in the aftermath of Partition and the accession of Kashmir to India. This dissertation recuperates the relevance of Naya Kashmir during the rule of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed (1953-63), the second Prime Minister of the state. Naya Kashmir originated as a progressive project of state *and* socio-cultural reform, emanating from the particular context of the Jammu and Kashmir princely state in the late colonial period. However, this dissertation argues that it was still utilized by Bakshi in his project of state building and reform nearly a decade later. In moving the manifesto out of the context of its own production, and into the period of Bakshi's government, we are able to see the durability of the ideas that undergird the project, and the ways in which the local leadership attempted to fulfill its aims of economic, educational, and cultural transformation, even after the state was divided and became part of a new political reality.

Naya Kashmir's trajectory also reveals the tensions within the state building project. While the government was attempting to produce a secular modernizing Kashmir, it was also dealing with the realities of Kashmir's unresolved political context, as the region remained a disputed territory between India and Pakistan in the international arena. This dissertation argues that while Naya Kashmir had the potential to revolutionize Kashmiri society, its actual impact

was constrained by Kashmir's unresolved political context. As a result, these policies cultivated an opposition from the very class they meant to integrate into the Indian Union, evidenced by the mass movement for self-determination that erupted against the state during the Holy Relic Incident, just a few months after Bakshi's rule had ended in 1963.

This dissertation allows us to see developments in Kashmir outside the framework of India-Pakistan relations or India-Kashmir (center-state) relations. Under Bakshi, Naya Kashmir's trajectory constituted a local logic, borne out of local concerns and needs. It also foregrounds the perspectives of a diverse set of Kashmiri political and social actors, as they sought to resolve the problems of their diverse and marginalized society. In doing so, it contributes to a growing body of South Asian historiography that examines governance and state-building in the immediate aftermath of decolonization, as well as the everyday postcolonial state and state-society relations.

Introduction

A Radical Manifesto

On September 29, 1944, leaders of the National Conference, an anti-monarchical, secular nationalist Kashmiri political party, convened their annual meeting in Sopore, a town in the Baramulla district of the Kashmir Valley. The National Conference was at the forefront of leading the opposition against the Dogra monarchy that governed Kashmir in the British colonial period (1846-1947). Led by Sheikh Abdullah, who was to become the first Prime Minister of the Jammu and Kashmir state (1947-1953), the purpose of the meeting was to adopt the party's "Naya [New] Kashmir" document, a manifesto that had been drafted with the help of prominent leftists in the subcontinent.[1] In the period of decolonization in the Indian subcontinent and around the world, the party sought to pave the way for an independent, modernizing, socialist welfare state that would reduce the monarch to a titular figurehead. In this document, the Jammu and Kashmir state was a distinct country, with a Muslim-majority, but significant provisions for its Hindu, Sikh, Christian and Buddhist minorities.[2] The forty-four-page manifesto outlined an ambitious program for a future secular and democratic state, borrowing heavily from Soviet-style models of governance and a planned economy. Geographically, the manifesto covered the regions of Jammu, Kashmir, Ladakh and the frontier regions, the areas that constituted the Dogra princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. Its authors declared that they were building a Naya

[1] Until 1965, the chief executive of the Jammu and Kashmir state was known as the "Prime Minister," as the state had some autonomy in its internal affairs. Under the government of G.M. Sadiq, the nomenclature became "chief minister," along with the other Indian states, in a move towards greater integration with the Indian Union.
[2] Rajesh Kadian, *The Kashmir Tangle: Issues and Options* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993) 58.

Kashmir in order to "raise ourselves and our children forever from the abyss of oppression and poverty, degradation and superstition, from medieval darkness and ignorance into the sunlit valleys of plenty ruled by freedom, science and honest toil."[3]

Nearly a decade later, the state of Jammu and Kashmir faced a vastly different political context. From being a princely state under the Dogras, it was now a disputed territory between the newly formed Indian and Pakistani nation-states after the Partition of the Indian subcontinent. Two-thirds of the former princely state was controlled by India, after a controversial accession in 1947 that brought Sheikh Abdullah and the National Conference to power, while one-third of the state was controlled by Pakistan, which gained the territory as a result of a war between the two countries in 1948. On August 9, 1953, Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad, the second Prime Minister of the Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir state, broadcast a policy speech on Radio Kashmir. Bakshi, who previously served as Deputy Prime Minister under Sheikh Abdullah's administration, had, on the order of the Government of India, come to power after arresting and deposing Sheikh Abdullah. In his speech, he reassured the people of the state that his government would be committed to the ideals of the Naya Kashmir manifesto, and would urgently pay attention to the economic and social reconstruction of the state.[4] Blaming the Sheikh for creating economic and political mayhem, he reaffirmed the National Conference's pledge to "build anew the economic and social life of the people of the state in accordance with our genius traditions and resources, with the help of and in partnership with the people of India and those other states who are friendly towards us."[5] Members of the new state legislature also made reference to the manifesto, declaring that under Sheikh Abdullah's government, "the New

[3] *New Kashmir,* New Delhi: Kashmir Bureau of Information, no date, 10.
[4] "Crisis in Kashmir Explained," Directorate of Information and Broadcasting (Srinagar: Lalla Rookh Publications, 1953) 8.
[5] "Crisis in Kashmir Explained," 9.

Kashmir programme [had] remained confined to paper plans only."[6] It was now the task of Bakshi's government to implement its vision, to finally produce the new Kashmir.

Overview

This dissertation traces the relevance of the Naya Kashmir manifesto through time and foregrounds its importance for Kashmir's early postcolonial history, especially under the decade-long rule of Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad (1953-1963).[7] Naya Kashmir was a progressive project of state *and* socio-cultural reform located in the particular context of the Jammu and Kashmir princely state in the late colonial period; however, as we see above, it was still utilized by Bakshi in his project of state-building and reform nearly a decade later.[8] Why do I wish to resurrect a manifesto and its afterlife that, as some scholars have argued, is a "distant memory now?"[9] Why did Bakshi's government continue to take recourse to the Naya Kashmir manifesto, put into motion by the man he would eventually come to take power from? How did his government implement its multiple objectives, and to what ends? What constraints were placed upon this reform project by Kashmir's post-Partition status? What kind of future did it enable, and what did it foreclose? And finally, how was this reform project received within the state; how did people respond to it and how were they shaped by it?

In attempting to answer these questions, this dissertation argues that the trajectory of the Naya Kashmir manifesto has critical insight for understanding the history of Kashmir, especially as it relates to its postcolonial state formation. In moving the manifesto out of the context of its own production, and into the period of Bakshi's government, we are able to see the duration and

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[6] "Unanimous Vote of Confidence in Bakshi Government," Directorate of Information and Broadcasting, Jammu and Kashmir Government, October 5, 1953.
[7] When referring to the entire state, I use the terms "Jammu and Kashmir" and "Kashmir" alternatively. I will use the term "Kashmir Valley" when referring specifically to one of the regions within the state.
[8] When referring specifically to the manifesto, I use the terminology "Naya Kashmir manifesto." When referring broadly to the progressive project of state-building/reform, I use the term "Naya Kashmir."
[9] Sumantra Bose, *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003) 27.

continuity of the ideas that undergird the project, and the ways in which the local leadership attempted to fulfill its aims of economic, educational, and cultural transformation, even after the state was divided and became part of a new political reality. Bakshi's government prioritized and actualized Naya Kashmir on all levels of state policy, including an emphasis on economic development, increased educational opportunities, and the cultivation of a local intelligentsia tasked with defining Kashmiri culture through cultural programs and activities. Naya Kashmir thus became synonymous with state building and reform in the early postcolonial period. As I argue in this dissertation, Naya Kashmir enabled the local state to take the primary role in Kashmir's postcolonial state formation, as it navigated Kashmir's post-Partition political realities as well as the internal compulsions of varying ethnic, regional, religious, and class-based communities in the state. In the 1950s and 1960s, with the financial assistance of the Government of India, the Jammu and Kashmir state established a number of public institutions and developmental projects, including schools, colleges, universities, hospitals, roads, irrigation, agriculture, power projects, cultural centers, stadiums, and social welfare associations. A progressive vision for Kashmir was being constructed and to a limited extent, implemented.

The history of Naya Kashmir under Bakshi is crucial for a number of reasons. First, it allows us to see developments in Kashmir outside of the direct framework that remains embroiled in India-Pakistan relations or India-Kashmir (center-state) relations. Indeed, under Bakshi, Naya Kashmir's trajectory constituted a local logic, borne out of local concerns and needs. The state government played a crucial role in responding to the demands of the local population, eager for the change that Naya Kashmir had promised to set into motion a decade earlier. Second, Naya Kashmir's trajectory foregrounds the perspectives of diverse Kashmiri political elite, bureaucratic, and educated classes, as they sought to resolve the problems of their

diverse and marginalized society, and bring Kashmir "from darkness to light."[10] This dissertation gives this class agency, as we come to see how local aspirations intersected and conflicted with broader political realities. This class of Kashmiris was active in framing Naya Kashmir, and shaping how it was eventually implemented on the ground. Furthermore, it was not just the elite and bureaucratic classes that were impacted by Naya Kashmir; indeed, one of the more important features of Bakshi's government is its greater reach towards the masses in the state, including workers, peasants, and artisans. On some level, ordinary people became a part of the state project of reform, either by pushing for better schools and colleges in their areas, or seeking employment in government service. Naya Kashmir thus provides an important lens into state-society relations in a dynamic moment of transformation. Finally, Naya Kashmir allows us to see the continuities as well as the cleavages in the local dynamics of the state from the pre- and post-Partition period.

Paradoxically, Naya Kashmir's trajectory also reveals the tensions within the state building project. While the government was attempting to produce a secular modernizing Kashmir, it was also dealing with the realities of Kashmir's unresolved political context. State building was happening while Kashmir remained a disputed territory; in the international arena, the United Nations had in 1948 called for a plebiscite, once hostilities between India and Pakistan had ceased. Additionally, various groups within Kashmir were contesting the state's accession to India. This dissertation reveals how, in response, the state government sought to appease and gain legitimacy from the state's main constituency, Kashmiri Muslims based in the Kashmir Valley. Kashmiri Muslims were the primary group that the state's leadership sought to integrate into the Indian Union. Thus, there was a tension between the ideals of Naya Kashmir,

[10] The Urdu phrase "Chilman se chaman" translated "From Darkness to Light," is the title of one of the autobiographies I use in this dissertation, written by a former principal of the Women's College in Srinagar, Shamla Mufti. The "darkness" refers to life for many Kashmiris under Dogra rule, especially women, under difficult socio-economic conditions, whereas the "light" refers to socio-economic progress made in the state after 1947.

of being a secular project for all regions and communities in the state, and the emphasis on the ground on the valley's Muslim population. As Bakshi's government catered its policies to empower Kashmiri Muslims, I highlight how these policies were marked by inter and intra-religious and regional tension, corruption, political suppression, and coercion. This dissertation, while engaging with the larger exercise of state building, showcases how these tensions play out in a ten-year period. It argues that while Naya Kashmir had the potential to revolutionize Kashmiri society, its actual impact was limited because of the compulsions of Kashmir's unresolved political context. As a result, these policies cultivated opposition from the very class they were meant to integrate into the Indian Union, evidenced by the mass movement that erupted against the state during the Holy Relic Incident, just a few months after Bakshi's rule had ended. At the end of Bakshi's decade of rule, Naya Kashmir had brought the state into the political and economic fold of the Indian Union, but failed to do the same for a majority of the citizens of the state, particularly in the Kashmir Valley. This population's alientation only became heightened in the late 1980's, manifest in an armed militancy that erupted against Indian rule, one that continues to this day.

While my research is focused on 1953-63, all of the chapters include forays into pre- and post- Bakshi times. This allows for an examination of the ruptures and continuities that occurred during the transitions from Dogra rule (1846-1947) to the various post-Partition governments, or from the colonial to the postcolonial period. Bakshi's term as Prime Minister was bookended by two significant events: The first, as I detail below, was the arrest and removal of Sheikh Abdullah in 1953. Just a decade later, in December 1963, the *moi-e-muqaddas,* a relic revered by Kashmiri Muslims, which is said to be the hair of the Prophet Muhammad, was stolen from the Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar. The event came to be known as the Holy Relic Incident. There

were mass protests throughout the state and hundreds of thousands of people were on the streets. The Holy Relic Committee, comprised of Muslim leaders throughout Kashmir, was formed to recover the relic. Bakshi, and by default the Indian State, was blamed for the disappearance. The relic was recovered a few weeks later under mysterious circumstances. The mobilizations, however, continued and paved the way for student and pro-plebiscite politics of the 1960s, underscoring the tenuous nature of Bakshi's state building project during the prior decade.[11]

National Conference, Accession, and Sheikh Abdullah's Government

The Naya Kashmir manifesto emerged in the context of tumultuous change and uncertainty in the subcontinent and specifically in Kashmir. Kashmir was historically an independent kingdom, led by a series of Kashmiri Hindu, and later, after the rise of Islam, Muslim rulers. Starting in the 16th century, the region was conquered by the Mughals, the Afghans, and finally, the Sikhs. In 1846, the British rewarded Gulab Singh, from the Dogra family in Jammu, with the territory of Jammu and Kashmir in return for his assistance in helping them defeat the Sikhs in the Anglo-Sikh wars of the mid-nineteenth century. Kashmir was a princely state under the Dogras, within the broader ambit of British colonial rule. The Dogras inherited a diverse territory, which included the regions of Jammu, Ladakh, the Kashmir Valley, Gilgit and Baltistan. In the late 1800's, of the territories that would become a part of the Indian-administered state of Jammu and Kashmir, their native region of Jammu had a mixture of both Hindus and Muslims, and a small minority of Sikhs. The Kashmir Valley was majority (over ninety percent) Muslim, but also had a small, but significant Pandit, or Kashmiri Hindu, community.[12] Finally, the region of Ladakh was majority-Buddhist but also had a substantial

[11] See G.N. Gauhar, *Hazratbal: The Central Stage of Kashmiri Politics* (New Delhi: Virgo Publications, 1998).
[12] "Pandits" is the term used for Kashmiri Hindus, who are upper-caste Brahmins that follow a regionally specific form of Shaivism (known as Kashmiri Shaivism). As a religious minority, the percentage of Pandits remained under five percent of the total population of the Valley during Dogra rule, and declined after 1947. Historically, they

Muslim minority. The Muslims in the state were also diverse; while Kashmiri-speaking Muslims dominated in the Valley, other regions included Punjabis and Baltis, as well as nomadic tribes such as the Gujjars and Bakerwals. There were also Shia Muslims, particularly in the region of Kargil in Ladakh.

In this dissertation, I primarily focus on the implementation of the state's policies in the Kashmir Valley, with Srinagar as its political and economic heartland. This is for two primary reasons. One, the Kashmir Valley, posed a *particular* challenge of legitimacy for the Jammu and Kashmir state, as it was there that demands for a plebiscite or greater autonomy were raised, especially amongst Kashmiri Muslims.[13] The regions of Jammu and Ladakh also had significant Muslim populations. However, in the case of Jammu, the post-Partition demographic of Muslims decreased significantly. As parts of the region became a part of Pakistan-administered Kashmir, or Azad Kashmir, many Jammu Muslims migrated to Pakistan or, as I mention below, were killed in violence by the Dogra army at the time of Partition. In Ladakh, the Muslim population was a minority and did not necessitate the due attention of the state. Indeed, regional political mobilizations in both Jammu and Ladakh under Bakshi called for greater integration with the Indian Union, and did not pose the same challenges as the Kashmir Valley.[14] Second, the Kashmir Valley faced a different political trajectory than Jammu and Ladakh in subsequent decades, as the region erupted into a mass uprising and armed militancy against the Indian state. While my primary focus is on the impact of state building in the Kashmir Valley, I consider how

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served as an administrative, literate class under the various rulers, and were better educated and more privileged in employment in comparison to Kashmiri Muslims.

[13] There were a number of Kashmiri Pandits that also opposed Kashmir's accession to India, including Prem Nath Bazaz and Pandit Raghunath Vaishnavi. On the whole, however, Kashmir Pandits overwhelmingly supported the accession.

[14] For a detailed examination of the different trajectories of Ladakh and Jammu, see Rekha Chowdhary, *Jammu and Kashmir: Politics of Identity and Separatism* (New York: Routledge, 216) 159-195.

the other regions of the state influenced particular policies and the development of Naya Kashmir, including, for example, linguistic and cultural policies.

By the first two decades of the twentieth century, the majority of the Muslim population in the Kashmir Valley was disadvantaged economically, politically, and socially. The vast majority of the Muslim population was illiterate and had no proprietary rights. Most were peasants and artisans, forced to pay crippling taxes to the Dogra state.[15] They were also not allowed to bear arms or serve in the Dogra army, while the Muslims in Jammu were.[16] Some were made to take part in *begar*, or forced labor.[17] While there was a small, but growing number of middle-class Muslim families involved in business, trade, or religious leadership, very few were educated in modern educational institutions, a reality that was in stark contrast to Muslim political and social elites in other parts of the subcontinent. As a result, there were very few Muslims in the state administration. Because of their socioeconomic conditions, there was a perception amongst Kashmiri Muslims that they were being discriminated against because of their religious background.[18]

Kashmiri Pandits were a small minority in the Valley, but had a significant political and administrative presence and fared better than their Muslim counterparts in terms of education and employment. A number of them had mobilized in 1915 in order to ensure that only state-subjects would be able to serve in the state's administration, as opposed to the large numbers of Punjabi Hindus the Dogras would employ, a step that protected their community's material

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[15] Mridu Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Islam, Rights and the History of Kashmir* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004) 150-156.
[16] Iffat Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict and International Dispute* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) 24.
[17] *Begar* involved any form of work that the state forced its subjects to do, including projects such as road-building. Workers received little to no payment. See Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict and International Dispute,* 26.
[18] Chowdhary, *Jammu and Kashmir,* 6.

interests. Under the Dogras, they received favorable treatment to the extent that they were identified with the ruling class in the eyes of many Kashmiri Muslims.[19]

In the 1920s and 1930s, inspired by anti-imperialist and nationalist movements across the subcontinent, Kashmiri Muslims, too, demanded political and social rights from their Dogra rulers.[20] In 1924, a number of prominent Kashmiri Muslim leaders wrote a memorandum to the British Viceroy, Lord Reading, during his visit to the state. The list of grievances included a number of issues that were to appear in the Naya Kashmir manifesto. They included: better wages for the workers who were striking at the state silk factory, improvements in education for the Muslim community, greater representation of Muslims in the state administration, land reform, abolition of *begar*, and setting up a representative Legislative Assembly.[21] Kashmiri Muslim mobilization started to increase once a small number of them began to receive higher education in cities like Aligarh and Lahore. There, they were influenced by the modernist or left-leaning progressive politics of the Muslim intelligentsia. Upon their return, they created the Reading Room Party in 1930 in order to seek ways to empower the beleaguered Muslim community.[22]

One of the prominent leaders that emerged at this time was Sheikh Abdullah. Sheikh Abdullah was born in Soura in 1905 in a small business family. He received his Master's degree outside of the state, and returned to the Kashmir Valley, hoping to secure a position in the state's administration. After failing to do so, he became active with a number of groups, including the Reading Room Party, in order to mobilize Kashmiri Muslims to agitate for greater rights. A turning point in Muslim mobilization occurred in July 1931. A few months prior, a number of

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[19] Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict and International Dispute,* 10.
[20] The term "Kashmiri Muslims," specifies the ethnic Kashmiri-speaking Muslims based in the Kashmir Valley, and not the Muslims of the entire state.
[21] Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict and International Dispute,* 31.
[22] Prakash Chandra, "The National Question in Kashmir," *Social Scientist*, 13, 6, (June 1985): 36.

incidents had occurred in Jammu, including an alleged demolition of a mosque and the desecration of a copy of the Qur'an by police forces. In community-wide meetings addressing these concerns, a Pathan Muslim, Abdul Qadir, who served as a cook in Kashmir, made an inflammatory speech against the Dogra Maharaja, Hari Singh, and was charged with sedition. During his trial, a large crowd gathered outside of the jail in the old city of Srinagar, protesting his arrest.[23] The state police opened fire on the procession and killed twenty-one people. As a result of the violence, anti-Hindu riots broke out in other areas in Srinagar.[24] While issues of religious concern prompted the events, a number of scholars have argued that the underlying issues were socio-economic in nature. As Iffat Malik states, "Dissatisfaction at their [socio-economic] situation had been building up among the Muslims for some time." It was, therefore, "inevitable that at some point something would have triggered this dissatisfaction into looking for more concrete, outward expression."[25]

Two important developments occurred after the events of July 1931. First, facing public pressure, the Dogra government set up the Glancy Commission to examine the concerns of the state's Muslims. Following from the theme of the 1924 memorandum, the commission once again focused on issues of exorbitant taxes, *begar*, education and employment in government services. Second, Sheikh Abdullah established the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in 1932 in order to politically unite the Muslims of the state. A number of scholars have argued that the exclusion of Muslims from the economic and political resources of the Hindu-led state led to a religious sensibility that informed political mobilization, and so, religious discourses became inseparable from the discourse of rights.[26] For the Muslim Conference, the problem of

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[23] Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict and International Dispute,*34.
[24] Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict and International Dispute,*35.
[25] Ibid.
[26]Chowdhary, *Jammu and Kashmir*, 7.

Kashmir was one where a Hindu ruler dominated over and oppressed his majority-Muslim subjects. The Muslim Conference initially received support from the various Muslim groups in the state, including Muslims in Jammu as well as the Kashmir Valley. However, divisions arose between Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah, who was the head of the Jamia Masjid in Srinagar, and Sheikh Abdullah, over the latter's close ties with the Ahmadi Muslim community as well as his increasing popularity.[27] This division was to play out amongst the Muslims of the Valley, as some supported the Mirwaiz (known locally as the *bakras*) while others supported Sheikh Abdullah (known as *shers*).[28] Furthermore, while the leadership of the party sought Hindu-Muslim unity and the empowerment of all communities in the state, non-Muslims primarily saw it as working towards *Muslim* empowerment.

As the Sheikh began to grow in popularity, he became involved in political developments outside the state. The divisions within the Muslim Conference as well as the influence of leaders from the Indian National Congress caused Sheikh Abdullah to shift his approach to the politics of the state. Kashmiri Pandit writer and reformer, Prem Nath Bazaz, as well as Indian national leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru, convinced Sheikh Abdullah to extend the framework of the party to include the Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists of the state in a broader class—and not religious—based struggle against the Dogras.[29] The Muslim Conference was subsequently

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[27]Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict and International Dispute*, 45.

[28] The division between the *shers* and the *bakras* also had a different component pertaining to religious leadership. Sheikh Abdullah had the support of Mirwaiz Hamdani, who was a religious rival to Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah. While Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah preached from the Jamia Masjid, Mirwaiz Hamdani, who was seen as more Sufi in orientation, preached from the shrine of Shah-i-Hamdaan. The split in the mirwaiz lineage had occurred in the early 19th century as two brothers sought the position of head preacher. See Chitrelekha Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity, and the Making of Kashmir* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) 130.

[29] Iffat Malik suggests three potential reasons for the Sheikh's conversion of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference: enmity with Mirwaiz Yusuf, the genuine conversion to nationalist politics, or the desire to participate on the all-India political stage which could only happen if the movement was expanded to include all communities in the state. She suggests that, "in the light of subsequent events, one could plausibly argue that Abdullah's conversion was not ideological at all, but based purely on political considerations." See Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict and International Dispute,* 48-49. For the role of Prem Nath Bazaz in the conversion of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference, see Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging,* 279.

renamed to the more secular National Conference (NC) in 1938 and became left leaning in orientation.[30] A majority of the Muslim leaders from Jammu, as well as some from the Kashmir Valley including Mirwaiz Yusuf, were opposed to the new orientation of the National Conference and left the party, leaving it primarily Valley-centric.[31] As Mohammad Yusuf Ganai argues, these leaders, which included Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas from Jammu, who would later revive the Muslim Conference, "had an apprehension that the conversion would weaken the movement because the non-Muslims would not participate in the National Conference sincerely but for the sake of the safeguard of their vested interests."[32] Yet, religious differences were not the only factor in breaking away from the National Conference. There were regional ones too. Abbas and other Muslim leaders from Jammu did not see the National Conference as representing Jammu Muslims.[33] The National Conference was comprised mostly of the Kashmiri Muslim political elite, but also had prominent Kashmiri Pandits and Sikhs in its ranks. It received little support from Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist communities in Jammu and Ladakh, who saw it primarily as a Valley-based party.

The National Conference went beyond the Muslim Conferences' demands for better educational and economic rights, and also called for a responsible government and democracy. One of the important challenges the Sheikh faced was in bringing together the various regions of the state, and positioning the party as offering socio-economic transformation for all communities in the state. And so, with the help of prominent leftists in the subcontinent,

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[30] For a deeper discussion on the reasons why Sheikh Abdullah and others decided a secular nationalist organization would better suit their goals, as well as the contradictions in carrying this out, see Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects,* 274-280.

[31] It is relevant to note that Bakshi initially opposed the conversion of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference, but later accepted the decision once the working committee of the organization approved it. See Prem Nath Bazaz, *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir (*Srinagar: Gulshan Publishers, 1945) 168.

[32] Muhammad Yousuf Ganai, "Dogra Raj and the Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir 1932-1947," Ph.D Dissertation, History, (University of Kashmir, 2015) 177.

[33] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging,* 262.

especially B.P.L. Bedi, his wife Freda Bedi, and K.M Ashraf, the Naya Kashmir manifesto was published in 1944. The booklet in which the manifesto was published was small, and red in color. There was an image of a Kashmiri peasant woman holding the flag of the National Conference, which had an image of a white plough, above her head. The manifesto was intended to counter decades of oppression and poverty under the Dogras, "to fight the immemorial poverty of the peasant and the artisan, and the unmitigated helplessness of the worker."[34] Instead of seeing the struggle in religious terms—a Hindu state versus the Muslim masses—the manifesto declared that the struggle was along class lines: "it is for the poor, against those who exploit them; for the toiling people of our beautiful homeland against the heartless pranks of the social privileged."[35] The writers of the manifesto were conscious of the changes happening around the world, in the Soviet Union and elsewhere, and positioned the document as specifically formulating "more concretely [the National Conference's] own conception of the New Kashmir it strives to build."[36] Politically, the document called for a representative legislature called the National Assembly, universal suffrage, and decentralized governance "based on devolution of decision making and administrative responsibilities to districts, *tehsils* (subdivisions of districts), towns, and villages."[37] One of the more interesting aspects of the manifesto was its weightage towards the state's minorities, which included "Pandits, Sikhs, and Harijans," who were given two—instead of one—votes in the assembly during a transitional period.[38] A reason for this weightage could have been to deflect any concerns of Muslim majoritarianism that the minorities in the state held towards the National Conference.

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[34] *New Kashmir,* 6.
[35] *New Kashmir,* 5.
[36] *New Kashmir,* 7.
[37] Bose, *Roots of Conflict*, 25.
[38] *New Kashmir,* 19-20.

On the economic front, the manifesto drew a revolutionary new economic plan that abolished feudalism and gave land to the tiller, established cooperative associations, and placed emphasis on state-led industrialization. Under the plan, the state would control the means of production so as to ensure the fairest distribution of goods and services to its citizens. A crucial aim of the economic goals of the state was to achieve "national self-sufficiency as far as is consonant with the economic welfare of the general mass of the people of the State" and raise the "standard of living according to a definite specified programme of nation-building."[39] Culturally, the manifesto designated Urdu as the official language of the diverse state, and called for the development of the region's cultural heritage, with an emphasis on its religious pluralism. It articulated basic human and political rights, including the right to education, freedom of speech, press, worship and equality of all citizens, regardless of race, religion, nationality or birth. It also had a charter on women's and workers' rights, which included the right to divorce, equal wages, and paid maternity leave. One of the important themes that emerged in the manifesto was the need to integrate the diverse ethnic and religious groups in the state, and secure their role in building a New Kashmir; Kashmir was to be a polity based on progressive politics, not one that was divided because of its religious and ethnic diversity.

The manifesto came at a time when it appeared that the National Conference's popularity was waning with the reemergence of the Muslim Conference and increasing divisions amongst the various groups in the state in the lead up to Partition.[40] On one issue, however, the manifesto appeared to be vague. As Chitrelekha Zutshi argues, "it did not delineate the status of Kashmir within the future political structure of independent India…. Assume that the state…would be

[39] *New Kashmir,* 22.
[40] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, 289.

autonomous regardless of the political entities that replaced British rule."[41] Tensions over this lack of clarity would constrict the manifesto's implementation in the early postcolonial period. While Naya Kashmir appeared to revitalize political life in the state, and provided a blueprint for the activities of the National Conference, the Sheikh's detractors, including Mirwaiz Yusuf, declared that it held Kashmiri interests above Muslim interests. In a meeting of the recently revived Muslim Conference, in November 1945, the manifesto was denounced.[42] A number of Hindu groups in the state, conscious that they would lose their socio-economic privileges, also opposed the manifesto for pandering primarily to Muslim concerns, and felt that siding with the Maharaja, and not the National Conference, was a better course for them.[43] Nonetheless, Naya Kashmir continued to play an important role, especially in influencing the Sheikh's political thinking at the time of Partition.

Throughout the 1940s, it appeared that the National Conference was increasingly becoming allied with the Indian National Congress, while the Muslim Conference was more sympathetic to the Muslim League, which was calling for Pakistan, a Muslim-majority state.[44] Yet, as Chitrelekha Zutshi argues, there were no easy overlaps between the Muslim League and the Muslim Conference and the Indian National Congress and the National Conference. Rather, the relationship between these four organizations was constantly "evolving."[45] Nonetheless, while the Sheikh had a popular base in the Valley, the Muslim Conference was more dominant

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[41] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, 290.
[42] Syed Taffazul Hussain, *Sheikh Abdullah-A Biography: The Crucial Period 1905-1935* (Bloomington: Wordclay, 2008) 146.
[43] Victoria Schofield, *Kashmir in Crossfire (*London: IB Tauris, 1996) 110.
[44] Ayesha Jalal has argued that the head of the Muslim League, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, was not seeking a separate state, but a highly decentralized federal system in which Muslim-majority states would be given greater autonomy to conduct their affairs. Thus, he used "Pakistan" as a bargaining chip in his negotiations with the Indian National Congress. See Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
[45] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging,* 261. For a deeper discussion on the relationship between the Muslim League and the Muslim Conference, see Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging,* 264-265.

of the two parties in Jammu and Poonch. In 1946, Sheikh Abdullah launched the Quit Kashmir movement against the Dogra Maharaja Hari Singh, in direct contrast to the party's earlier stance of allowing the Maharaja to serve as a titular head. Most scholars have seen "Quit Kashmir" as an attempt by Abdullah to "revive his party's flagging popularity," which had occurred as a result of his growing closer to the Indian National Congress, a position that was unpopular in the Valley.[46]

By 1947, the Indian subcontinent was soon to be divided into Pakistan and India. The leaders of the princely states, including Jammu and Kashmir, had the option of joining either, bearing in mind the geography and demographics of the people of the state. The state's Muslims were divided; Chitrelekha Zutshi suggests that Kashmiri political and public opinion was not overwhelmingly in favor of India *or* Pakistan.[47] Furthermore, support for one party or individual, such as Sheikh Abdullah, did not necessarily entail support for India. In sum, there were a variety of political opinions in Kashmir at the time of Partition: pro-Pakistan Muslim parties (some members of the Muslim Conference), pro-Pakistan socialists (such as the Kisan Mazdoor Conference), pro-India, pro-India with a strong desire for autonomy (as with a number of National Conference leaders), and pro-Independence, a sentiment that did not organize itself in a political party, but was shared by a number of individuals across the spectrum.[48]

Naya Kashmir's importance emerged during Partition. One of the main reasons Sheikh Abdullah and some of his followers—although not all members of the National Conference—were averse to the Muslim League, and joining Pakistan, was because they envisioned it as a

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[46] Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict and International Dispute,* 57. Zutshi also details how Abdullah and the National Conference attempted to appease Kashmiri Muslims at this time, creating a religious trust to look over religious spaces of worship and creating a printing press on the grounds of a mosque in Srinagar. For more on Abdullah's decreasing popularity, see Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging,* 265-267.
[47] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, 308-310.
[48] Iffat Malik states that while Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah was in favor of joining Pakistan, some of the Jammu leaders of the Muslim Conference preferred independence. Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict and International Dispute,* 60.

party of landed elites with feudal interests that would not allow them to implement the progressive manifesto. Rekha Chowdhary argues that Jawaharlal Nehru and the Indian National Congress presented a democratic and multi-ethnic framework that would allow Kashmir to protect its identity, and "the Sheikh was afraid that a Pakistan dominated by Punjabi landlords would frustrate his dream of building a New Kashmir that gave land to the tillers and promoted egalitarian politics."[49] It was therefore, the "promise of autonomy for a multi-ethnic society in Jammu and Kashmir and democratic politics with a progressive agenda of social transformation which prompted the Sheikh to opt for India."[50] The point about the provision of autonomy is crucial for understanding why the Sheikh later turned away from the Government of India.

At the time the decision was to be made, however, leaders of both the Muslim and National Conference were in jail. The Maharaja vacillated in his decision, perhaps also aspiring for an independent state that was separate from both India and Pakistan.[51] He released Sheikh Abdullah from jail in September 1947. Meanwhile, in the same month, a local rebellion against the Dogras was underway in the area of Poonch, which was crushed by the Maharaja's soldiers, resulting in estimates of 150,000-200,000 people killed and an equal number fleeing to Pakistan.[52] As a result, Muslim tribesmen from northwest Pakistan, that were supported by officials in the Pakistan state, made their way to Kashmir in order to "liberate" Kashmir. The Maharaja sought military help from the newly formed Indian government under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. The Government of India made the Dogra ruler sign an Instrument of Accession before it would lend its assistance, and its army officially arrived in Srinagar, the

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[49] Chowdhary, *Jammu and Kashmir,* vii.
[50] Ibid. Chitrelekha Zutshi has argued that Sheikh Abdullah's decision to accede to India was as a result of political pragmatism instead of "unequivocal acceptance of India." See Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging,* 308.
[51] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, 305.
[52] Saeed Naqvi, "The Killing Fields of Jammu: How Muslims became a Minority in the Region," Scroll.in, July 10, 2016; Christopher Snedden, *The Untold Story of the People of Azad Kashmir* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012) 37-63.

capital of Kashmir, on October 27, 1947. The accession gave India control over Kashmir's defense, communications, and foreign affairs, but also promised that the state's future would be determined "by a reference to the people."[53] The terms of the accession were later incorporated into the Indian constitution via Article 370, which granted the state a special autonomous status within the Indian Union and stipulated that all the other articles of the Indian constitution that gave power to the central government would be applied to Kashmir only with the concurrence of the state's constituent assembly.

India and Pakistan subsequently went to war over Kashmir and India took the dispute to the United Nations, which called for a plebiscite in the region, which both the Indian and Pakistani leadership agreed to. The United Nations resolution called for the withdrawal of Pakistan's troops from the territory; this became a point of contention for both nation-states as Pakistan advocated a removal of Indian troops. After the war, one-third of the region, known as Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, came under Pakistani control, while the remaining two-thirds, which included the Kashmir Valley, Jammu, and Ladakh, was controlled by India. Within Indian-administered Kashmir, the Indian state placed Sheikh Abdullah and the National Conference in power, and the Dogra monarchy was abolished, with the son of the Maharaja, Karan Singh, serving as a titular *Sadar-i-Riyasat.*[54] The position of the prime minister was retained as a result of the state's autonomy. The National Conference now dominated the political scene in the state, as most of the leadership of the Muslim Conference went to Pakistan and were instrumental in the formation of the new Azad Kashmir government. However, as Zutshi has argued, the National Conference government soon lost its popular mandate, especially

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[53] Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict and International Dispute,* 67.
[54] After accession, the National Conference decided that Karan Singh would be given the role of "sadar-i-riyasat," a symbolic head of the state.

given that it was an "installation of the Indian government, a fact made apparent by the presence of a vast number of Indian troops in the state."[55]

With Sheikh Abdullah and the National Conference in power it appeared that the Naya Kashmir manifesto could now be implemented. In some ways, especially in terms of land reform, it was. However, Sheikh Abdullah's rule (1947-1953) was one of severe economic hardship, political suppression, and nepotism.[56] The tribal incursion from northwest Pakistan had caused significant hardship, especially in the regions of North Kashmir, including the second largest town, Baramulla. There were reports of looting and rape, including a violent attack on a Catholic convent and mission hospital.[57] As Andrew Whitehead argues, "the attackers were indiscriminate in their violence and so lost much of the goodwill they might have enjoyed as self-proclaimed liberators from Hindu princely rule."[58] The fear of the tribals reaching Srinagar buttressed significant support for the National Conference. The party responded to the tribal attack by organizing militias, including a Women's Self Defense Corps, bearing in mind the important role of women in building a new Kashmir. They also utilized propaganda elements, such as plays, theater, and poetry, through the use of a Cultural Front. However, when it came to the freedom of expression and organization that the manifesto had outlined, the National Conference dealt harshly with any individual that contested its vision, including those Kashmiris that supported Pakistan. Any individual that contested the National Conference's power or wanted the state to join Pakistan was arrested or exiled. Newspapers and periodicals that disagreed with Kashmir's accession to India were banned.

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[55] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging,* 313.
[56] Syed Mir Qasim, *My Life and Times* (Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1992) 43-48.
[57] Andrew Whitehead, "The People's Militia: Communists and Kashmiri Nationalism in the 1940s," *Twentieth Century Communism: A Journal of International History*, Vol. 2, (2010) 153.
[58] Whitehead, "The People's Militia," 153-154.

During his time in power, aside from suppressing voices of dissent, the Sheikh was determined to maintain Kashmir's autonomy, and attempted to keep Kashmir financially independent from the Government of India. Thus, it was difficult for a number of reforms based on the manifesto to take place, as a substantial amount of funding was required that the fledgling state did not have access to. Indeed, food prices rose as no imports were allowed in—the Sheikh wanted Kashmir to be self-sufficient—and peasants were forced to part with a quarter of their paddies under a system of procurement called *mujawaza.* The paddy was intended for use in state-owned rationing centers, but corruption amongst state officials led much of the food to be sold in the black market. Customs duties and taxes were high, and Syed Mir Qasim, a leader in the National Conference who later became Chief Minister, describes how during political tours, the Kashmir leadership saw "hungry people scramble for leftover food dumped in garbage cans."[59]

Despite the widespread political and economic instability, the Sheikh's government was determined to implement one aspect of the Naya Kashmir manifesto. In 1950, the government passed landmark land reforms that transferred land to the tiller without any compensation for the landlord. Although the move had support in the Muslim-majority areas, given that they were the prime beneficiaries of the reforms, many other groups within the Jammu and Kashmir state were not supportive of the groundbreaking step. Protests erupted in Jammu, where a number of Hindu landlords were forced to give up their land and felt that the new government was catering exclusively to Kashmiri Muslims, claiming that the National Conference had proved itself as a "Muslim communal party," and not a secular nationalist one.[60] Many people within the entire state, including Hindus and Buddhists who were mostly in Jammu and Ladakh, also wanted full

[59] Mir Qasim, *My Life and Times*, 46.
[60] Schofield, *Kashmir in Crossfire*, 171.

integration with the Indian Union and were not in favor of autonomy. The Praja Parishad, founded by Balraj Madhok, emerged as a leading political party in Jammu. It shared the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) ideology of Hindu nationalism and accused the Sheikh of trying to "Islamize the administration."[61] The organization launched a popular agitation in 1952, primarily calling for full integration into the Indian Union. The Sheikh dismissed the agitation as reactionary, and arrested many of its leaders. However, the specter of Hindu communalism influenced his thinking, and he began to doubt the safety of Kashmir's Muslims in a Hindu-majority India.[62] In addition, he began to articulate Kashmiri identity in a much more narrow sense—restricted to those Kashmiris based in the Valley—by drawing upon "a unique and distinct nature of Kashmiriyat which distinguished Kashmiris from people in other regions of the state."[63]

The combination of economic and political instability, the openly repressive policies of the National Conference, and the attitude of the Government of India which did not seem interested in holding the plebiscite to determine the wishes of the people of the state, drove, as Zutshi argues, "Kashmiri Muslims toward extolling the virtues of Pakistan and condemning India's highhandedness in occupying the territory."[64] In other words, increasing disillusionment towards India was not due to "irreconcilable differences between "Muslim-majority" Kashmir and "Hindu-majority" India, but rather, as a result of the way in which the state was dealt with—by both the National Conference and the Government of India—in the years after Partition.[65]

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[61] Navnita Chadha Behera, *State, Identity and Violence: Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh* (Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 2000) 85.
[62] Mohammad Sheikh Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar: An Autobiography*, translated from the Urdu by Mohammad Amin (Srinagar: Gulshan Publishers, 2013), 349.
[63] Behera, *State, Identity and Violence,* 61. Kashmiriyat
[64] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, 314.
[65] Ibid.

In the meantime, the Government of India, led by Nehru, began to lose faith in Sheikh Abdullah. Aside from the state's economic woes, the Sheikh had begun to resist increasing Indian influence in Kashmir's affairs, including attempts to further integrate the state into the Indian Union. The reasons for the Sheikh's political transitioning away from India and subsequent dismissal have been discussed at length elsewhere; the primary point to note is that the Government of India was concerned with his ties to Western leaders and diplomats, that he had made a number of speeches suggesting that independence was a better course for Kashmir, and his insistence that the accession was *not* final.[66] Members of the Sheikh's cabinet that were in favor of increased integration with India, including Bakshi, who served as deputy prime minister, G.M. Sadiq, and D.P Dhar, were alarmed by the maladministration and increased political instability. They regularly kept the Government of India updated about the political developments in the state.

The Government of India, along with the *Sadar-i-Riyasat*, Karan Singh, orchestrated Sheikh Abdullah's removal with the assistance of Bakshi and his associates.

Bakshi was the only one willing to take on the role of Prime Minister; he was tasked with arresting the Sheikh and those who were sympathetic to his political position, and forming a new cabinet. On August 8, 1953, Sheikh Abdullah was arrested in Gulmarg, and the state police, now under the command of Bakshi, conducted a series of raids and arrests of his closest associates. There was spontaneous uproar in Kashmir over Sheikh Abdullah's arrest and removal from power. Despite the authoritarianism of the Sheikh and the National Conference, Kashmiris still took to the streets, protesting the high-handedness of the Government of India in meddling in

[66] For varying accounts of Sheikh Abdullah's arrest, see Josef Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir (*Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966); Karan Singh, *Heir apparent: an autobiography*. Vol. 1. (New York: Oxford University Press,1982); Mohammad Sheikh Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar: An Autobiography*: translated from the Urdu by Mohammad Amin (Srinagar: Gulshan Publishers, 2013).

Kashmir's affairs by removing the Sheikh from power. Bakshi's opponents labeled him a *ghaddar,* or traitor, for going against his former political partner. In the ensuing riots and protests, Bakshi's government clamped down heavily against the protestors, and while estimates vary, anywhere from 30 to as many as 1500 people were killed.[67] Many more were arrested and tortured in jail. There were nearly three weeks of strikes, primarily in the Valley. The political situation became increasingly volatile. Syed Mir Qasim, a member of the National Conference and former Chief Minister of the state, records in his memoirs that sitting in his law chambers in Anantnag in South Kashmir, he witnessed "waves after waves of protest marches surging past."[68] Because of Mir Qasim's political affiliations with the National Conference and Bakshi, the people's anger turned against him and crowds threatened to burn down his house. G.M. Sadiq called him to Srinagar to join the new cabinet. Along the way, he encountered crowds of people demanding the release of the bodies that were killed in police firing. Mir Qasim narrated that a twenty thousand strong crowd in Shopian proceeded towards the Dak Bungalow where he and his fellow travellers were staying. "Nobody was willing to risk their life to rescue us…we slipped out in *burqa*. Srinagar was in chaos. Bakshi's house, despite the police, was also under attack."[69] Within a few weeks, however, Bakshi managed to quell the protests and push forth his government's agenda.

My lengthy treatment of Kashmir's pre-1953 history is important for a number of reasons. One, it provides a historical context for the evolution of Naya Kashmir, including the socio-economic and political reasons for its formation under the Dogras, and the ways in which the aims of the local project were obscured as the state of Jammu and Kashmir became

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[67] Korbel estimates that between 30-800 were killed, while Kashmiri journalist, Sanaullah Bhat, in his book, *Kashmir in Flames*, says that nearly 1500 people were killed. See Sanaullah Bhat, *Kashmir, 1947-1977 Tak* (Srinagar: Ali Mohd and Sons, 1980) 72; Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir*, 242-244.
[68] Mir Qasim, *My Life and Times,* 68.
[69] Mir Qasim, *My Life and Times,* 70.

embroiled in the politics surrounding Partition. Second, it allows us to see the frictions that existed within Kashmiri society—between and amongst various communities and regions—and how those continued and transformed in the early postcolonial period. Most importantly, it allows for an understanding of the socio-economic position of Kashmiri Muslims, who will emerge as the primary targets of the state's policies, and helps us situate their shaping of and responses to the state project. Finally, it provides a summary of the political events that culminated in Bakshi taking power. Before situating the internal and external objectives of his government, an examination of Bakshi's background, as well as how he came to lead the coup against the Sheikh is crucial.

Khalid-i-Kashmir: The Builder of Kashmir

Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad was born on July 20, 1907 in the heart of downtown Srinagar, in an area called Safakadal.[70] His family came from a lower middle class background; his father lived with his in-laws and was unemployed and his mother was a midwife. He had four brothers and two sisters. With the financial assistance of his uncle, Bakshi was able to attend one of the Christian missionary schools in the area, founded by British missionary Tyndale Biscoe. Because of his family's economic conditions, he was unable to continue his education, and dropped out of school after completing the eighth grade, which at the time was considered "middle pass," and an appropriate qualification for certain forms of employment, including teaching.[71] Impressed with the leadership qualities that he had exhibited in extracurricular activities, a local missionary encouraged Bakshi to serve in one of the mission's schools in Ladakh, and for two years Bakshi lived in Skardu and Leh as a teacher and headmaster. He also

[70] O.N. Kak, "Khalid-I-Kashmir Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad Through My Eyes," Research and Publications Department, Accession No: 12033, (Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir) iv.
[71] While it is commonly understood that Bakshi was only an "8th pass", there are some reports that he completed the 9th grade. See Kak, "Khalid-i-Kashmir."

travelled with the missionaries to Shigar, in Gilgit.[72] Back in Srinagar, there were rumors that as a result of working with Christian missionaries, Bakshi himself had converted to Christianity.[73] Upon hearing this, his family encouraged him to return to Srinagar. During his stay in Ladakh, Bakshi came across the ideologies of Gandhi and the Indian National Congress. Soon after returning to Srinagar, he was married, and worked at a local branch of the All India Spinners Association. He was an avid follower of Gandhi and became one of the first links between the Indian National Congress and Kashmir.[74] He then worked as a salesman in a *khadi* store on Hari Singh High Street and was known for being the "Kashmiri Gandhi" for his calls to boycott British goods.[75]

In 1931, Bakshi was twenty-four when the Kashmiri Muslim agitation against Dogra rule began. He became active in politics, aligning himself with Sheikh Abdullah and at the time, the Muslim Conference. He was tasked with bringing traders, unions, and laborers into the fold of the Muslim Conference. After the organization was split into the National Conference, Bakshi—who initially voted against the conversion—went along with the shift and, as district president, organized branches of the party throughout the Valley. He was also involved in establishing a number of youth federations. His anti-government activities led to a number of arrests, and many times he was forced to go underground. For his bravery, he was referred to as the iconic "Khalid-e-Kashmir" after Khalid ibn Walid, the Arab Muslim general who was credited with expanding the Islamic empire in the seventh century.[76] During the National Conference's "Quit Kashmir" movement against the Dogras in 1946, he escaped to Lahore to gain support for the agitation

[72] Interview with Author, Hasrat Ghadda, Srinagar, Aug. 27, 2014.
[73] M. Ashraf Tak (editor), "Bakshi Number: A Special Issue on Former Prime Minister, J&K," *Sheeraza,* (Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Languages and Culture) 100.
[74] Interview with Author, Hasrat Ghadda.
[75] Kak, "Khalid-i-Kashmir"*,* 19.
[76] M. Ashraf Tak, *Bakshi Number,* 103.

outside of Kashmir.

Little is written about his political position on the future of Kashmir during Partition. Yet, a number of oral interviews conducted with those who were part of the political milieu at the time or related to Bakshi confirmed that in 1947, at a working committee meeting of the National Conference, when asked whether Kashmir should accede to India or Pakistan, Bakshi replied "Pakistan."[77] His reasons for favoring Pakistan were less ideological—he did not necessarily believe in the two-nation theory—and more pragmatic. He knew that up until then, Kashmir's economic, educational, and political ties were closer to the territories that would become Pakistan than India—Lahore was far more familiar to the average Kashmiri than was Delhi.[78] Knowing Sheikh Abdullah's indecisive personality, however, he added that the party should commit to what was decided at the meeting, as the cost of vacillating would be too high and average Kashmiris would suffer.[79] The Sheikh opted for India, and from that point onwards, Bakshi was committed to safeguarding Kashmir's accession to India.

In the aftermath of accession, Bakshi remained a bulwark for the National Conference. He played a critical role in Jammu, where the political situation had deteriorated as a result of the violence against Muslims by the Dogra army. Bakshi organized border defenses against the tribals, assisted in restoring essential services and providing shelter, clothing, and food for refugees. He established a fleet of buses for state transport, which had not existed under the Dogras. Because of his ability to mobilize and maintain internal security, Sheikh Abdullah named him deputy prime minister.

B.N. Mullik, the former Director of the Indian Intelligence Bureau, writes in his memoirs

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[77] Interview with Author, Mir Nazir Ahmed, Srinagar, Dec. 15, 2013; Interview with Author, Nazir Bakshi, Srinagar, Nov. 18, 2013; Interview with Author, Pirzada Hafizullah Makhdoomi.
[78] Interview with Author, Nazir Bakshi.
[79] Interview with Author, Pirzada Hafizullah Makhdoomi.

that Bakshi's allegiance to India was "not based on such strong ideological grounds."[80] It is, of course, difficult to ascertain Bakshi's intentions. Nonetheless, those who were close to him describe him as being "practical" and "pragmatic." An interview I conducted with his nephew, Nazir Bakshi, provides some context for Bakshi's decision-making at the time of Sheikh Abdullah's arrest. Nazir Bakshi stated that "Once Kashmir had already acceded, [Bakshi] decided that India was too powerful for Kashmiris to fight. So he decided to get the best out of India."[81] It is for this reason that when Sheikh Abdullah was becoming increasingly vocal against India, "Bakshi believed that he was leading Kashmiris down the wrong path."[82] Like a number of National Conference leaders at the time, perhaps Bakshi believed an independent Kashmir seemed implausible, as it would be unable to defend itself against the various regional and Western powers that had a stake in the future of the state. Furthermore, as his nephew suggested, Bakshi was also concerned with the violence that the Indian state would unleash upon Kashmiris were they to change their political course. As for taking on the role of Prime Minister, Bakshi believed it was better "to have a Kashmiri Muslim as the Prime Minister, instead of someone from outside of the state."[83] Nazir Bakshi's sentiments about Bakshi's political thinking appear to be confirmed by the statement made by B.N. Malik—that Bakshi's allegiance was not based on "strong ideological grounds," but rather, practical ones.

The New Government's Internal and External Objectives

After the Sheikh was deposed, Naya Kashmir faced a new political reality. Whereas under the Dogras it marked a break from certain Muslim and Hindu political elites, after the

[80] B.N. Mullik also states that Bakshi was more pragmatic and realized that Kashmir's welfare depended on its unity with India and apprehended that Kashmir would be swamped by the tribals invasion and would lose its identity if it acceded to Pakistan. See B.N. Mullik, *My Years with Nehru: Kashmir* (Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1971) 14.
[81] Interview with Author, Nazir Bakshi.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid.

Sheikh's arrest it marked a break within the National Conference, which split into those who were loyal to Sheikh Abdullah, and sought either independence, a plebiscite or greater autonomy from the Government of India, and those who aligned themselves with Bakshi and the Government of India. Naya Kashmir was not the vehicle for latter's state building project. Given the response of the Kashmiri public after the arrest of the Sheikh, Bakshi's government faced a crisis of legitimacy. As a result, it's policies had to address multiple, sometimes conflicting, internal and external objectives. Within Kashmir, it had to secure legitimacy in the face of multiple challenges and create political stability amongst the Kashmiri masses after the Sheikh's arrest. Similarly, it had to undermine the pro-Sheikh, pro-plebiscite, and pro-Pakistan elements within Kashmiri society, positioning Kashmir's relationship to India as the most appropriate choice for the region. It had to live up to its promises made in the aftermath of the arrest of building a modernizing, secular state that was committed to rectifying the ills of the past and building a more equitable society, a new Kashmir.[84] It had to position itself as being drastically different from the unpopular Dogra rule, and also more practical and expedient than Sheikh Abdullah's government. Unlike Sheikh Abdullah, Bakshi had no qualms about taking money from the Government of India. In addition, the state had to respond to the demands and requirements of the Indian state, which was calling upon the Kashmiri government to secure the accession, create political stability, suppress pro-Pakistan and pro-independence sentiment, and cultivate greater emotional integration between Kashmiris and the Indian Union. An important point to consider in the Indian context is that Sheikh Abdullah continued to have support amongst a number of Indian political leaders, including Mridula Sarabhai, a prominent Indian politician and former Congress worker. Sarabhai and others, including Jayaprakash Narayan, a

[84] "Crisis in Kashmir Explained," Directorate of Information and Broadcasting, (Srinagar: Lalla Rookh Publications, 1953).

prominent socialist who formed the Praja Socialist Party, started an anti-Bakshi lobby in Delhi, urging Nehru and the Government of India to release Sheikh Abdullah and bring him to power once more. Bakshi also had to respond to international concerns—from the United Nations and other states—on the future of Kashmir and the (im)plausibility of a plebiscite. Importantly, he had to respond to the aspirations of Kashmir's Muslims, who his government was trying to appease, while attempting to be inclusive of other social groups and ensuring that there were no communal or regional tensions in the state, as there had been under the Dogras and under the Sheikh. As I will discuss in the dissertation, a number of these objectives clashed with one another.

Most importantly, Bakshi's government took a keen interest in the empowerment of Kashmiri Muslims—notwithstanding the ethnic and sectarian divisions in this group—and they became the principal beneficiaries of a number of economic and educational policies. The reasons for this are multiple, and go beyond charges that the Muslim-led bureaucracy was communally minded, and therefore, preferred to exclusively patronize Kashmiri Muslims. One, Kashmiri Muslims constituted the majority of the citizens of Kashmir.[85] Two, most of them had remained illiterate under Dogra rule, and were demanding that they also benefit from the social and economic progress that other communities in the state, including the Kashmiri Pandits, had made. Third, and crucially, the focus on Kashmiri Muslims reflected a strategic desire on the part of the new government to maintain political stability in the aftermath of the disputed accession and arrest of Sheikh Abdullah. In the eyes of the Government of India and the Jammu and Kashmir state, the Kashmiri Muslim political identity was deemed suspect; indeed, as some have

[85] Prior to Bakshi's period, the last census taken in Kashmir was conducted in 1941, under the Dogras. The 1951 census in the region was not completed because of political instability. The 1941 census stated that Muslims constituted over seventy-seven percent of the total population of the entire state, and over ninety-three percent of the Kashmir Valley. See Captain R.G. Wreford, *Census of India, 1941, Volume XXII, Jammu and Kashmir, Parts I and II*, (Jammu: The Ranbir Government Press, 1943) 8.

argued, it was increasingly pro-Pakistan as a result of the oppressive nature of the National Conference.[86] The potential political shift towards Pakistan was a development that the new government could ill-afford. Muslims were also seen as being sentimental, and easily influenced by Pakistani propaganda that relied on emotional calls for religious solidarity and unity.[87] As Bakshi came to power in this moment, the development of a secular, modern Kashmiri Muslim identity—that was aligned with the Government of India—was critical to his government's policies.

These developments could not take place while Kashmir's political status was still undetermined. Political sentiment in Kashmir notwithstanding, and despite the status of Kashmir remaining unresolved in the international arena, Bakshi adopted a series of measures that were intended to settle the political question of Kashmir once and for all and pave the way for modernization and economic reform.[88] Under Sheikh Abdullah, Kashmir had greater financial autonomy and rarely accepted funds from the Government of India. In order to go forward with his modernizing agenda and to propel Naya Kashmir's economic and social development, Bakshi sought Indian financial aid. The Government of India insisted that the state ratify the accession before they would agree to provide significant financial assistance. To ward off any possibility of a plebiscite, in February of 1954, Bakshi called upon the Constituent Assembly to ratify the state's accession to India. Subsequently, Kashmir's financial and fiscal relations were on the same footing as other Indian states and the Government of India provided the Kashmiri state with loans to implement its development policies.[89] Through the removal of customs duties in

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[86] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging,* 313-314.
[87] Prem Nath Bazaz, *The Shape of Things in Kashmir*, (Delhi: Pamposh Publications, 1965).
[88] The Kashmir issue was still being debated in the United Nations, which had made repeated calls for the cessation of hostilities and the holding of a plebiscite.
[89] Khalid Wasim Hassan, "History Revisited: Narratives on Political and Constitutional Changes in Kashmir (1947-1990)," Working Paper 233, (Bangalore: Institute for Social and Economic Change, 2009).

1954, which the Sheikh had been adamant in maintaining, Bakshi further integrated Kashmir's economy to India's.[90]

Additional attempts at greater political integration occurred in the first few years of Bakshi's rule. Article 370 was slowly eroded as certain provisions in the Indian constitution concerning fundamental rights became applicable in the state with a condition that these civil liberties could be suspended at any time in the interest of security without any judicial review. In 1956, the state's Constituent Assembly also approved a draft of the constitution of the state that declared Jammu and Kashmir an integral part of the Indian Union.[91] In addition, several central departments, such as Audit, Customs, Finance, the Election Commission, and the Supreme Court extended their jurisdiction to Kashmir.[92] The Indian Parliament was also allowed to legislate upon a wider range of subjects. In 1958, further bureaucratic integration was achieved when the Indian Administrative Services and the Indian Police Services were authorized to function in the state.[93] It is important to note that these policies were implemented in the absence of a democratic order in Kashmir, as the National Conference was the only party that was allowed to contest elections in the state—political parties or candidates that contested Kashmir's accession to India were not permitted to run. To settle the confusion that arose in the state after Sheikh Abdullah's arrest, Bakshi sought to resolve the uncertainly about the future of the state and so, created greater political and legal integration with the Government of India. Departing from Sheikh Abdullah's approach, this allowed his government to undertake a number of economic and social policies under Naya Kashmir, but crucially, it also was the moment that the state's autonomy was eroded.

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[90] Government of Jammu and Kashmir. "Jammu and Kashmir, 1953-1954, A Review of the Achievements of Bakshi government," Directorate of Information and Broadcasting (Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir, 1954).
[91] A.G. Noorani, *The Kashmir Question* (Bombay: Manaktalas, 1964) 73.
[92] Prem Nath Bazaz, *The Shape of Things in Kashmir*, 15.
[93] Ibid.

Historiography

This dissertation aims to make a number of important interventions in the historiography of modern Kashmir. This historiography has been increasingly evolving, especially in recent years. Initially, scholarship on Kashmir revolved around relations between India and Pakistan, and the changing status of Kashmir within the Indian Union, in an attempt to explain the armed militancy against Indian rule in the late 1980s.[94] Much of this scholarship focused on "what went wrong?" in Kashmir, foregrounding the ways in which the Government of India's undemocratic policies in the state after 1947, and especially after 1953, led to gradual alienation, and eventual violence against its rule.[95] In recent years, scholars have moved beyond the Delhi-Srinagar orientation to understand socio-cultural, religious, and economic developments that address the Jammu and Kashmir state's internal diversity and complexity, and also situate it within the broader ambit of South and Central Asian history. Far from simply being a result of politics between India and Pakistan, or the events of 1947, or even center-state relations, recent

[94] For studies of Kashmir's evolving relationship with India, as well as relations between India and Pakistan, see: Sumantra Bose, *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Šumit Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir: Portents of War, Hopes of Peace* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Alastair Lamb, *Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy 1846 – 1990* (Hertford: Roxford Books, 1991); Balraj Puri, *Kashmir Insurgency and After* (New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2013); Victoria Schofield, *Kashmir in the Crossfire* (London: IB Tauris, 1996); Robert Wirsing, *Kashmir in the Shadow of War: Regional Rivalries in a Nuclear Age* (London: Routledge, 2003); and A.G. Noorani's *Article 370: A Constitutional History of Jammu and Kashmir* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011). For pro-Indian perspectives, see V.P. Menon, *The Story of The Integration of the Indian States* (New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2014); Jyoti Bhushan Das Gupta, *Indo-Pakistan Relations, 1947-1955*, (Amsterdam: Djambatan, 1958); Sisir Gupta, *Kashmir: A Study in India-Pakistan Relations (*Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1967); Prem Shankar Jha, *Kashmir 1947: Rival Versions of History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). For pro-Pakistan accounts, see Aziz Beg, *Captive Kashmir* (Lahore: Allied Business Corp, 1957); Alastair Lamb, *Crisis in Kashmir 1947-1966* (London: Routledge, 1966).

[95] Behera, *State, Identity and Violence*; Bose, *Roots of Conflict*; Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir*; Tavleen Singh, *Kashmir: A Tragedy of Errors* (New York: Viking, 1995); Rajesh Kadian, *The Kashmir Tangle: Issues and Options* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1993); Noor Ahmad Baba, "Democracy and Governance in Kashmir," in Nyla Ali Khan (ed), *The Parchment of Kashmir: History, Society, Polity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Ashutosh Varshney, "India, Pakistan, and Kashmir: Antinomies of Nationalism" *Asian Survey* 31.11 (1991): 997-1019; Reeta Chowdhari Tremblay, "Nation, identity and the intervening role of the state: A study of the secessionist movement in Kashmir," *Pacific Affairs* (1996): 495; Pratap Singh Verma, *Jammu and Kashmir at the political crossroads* (New Delhi: Vikas Pub, 1994); Ajit Bhattacharjee, *Kashmir: The Wounded Valley (*New Delhi: GBS Publishers, 1994); Ali Asghar Engineer (ed), *Secular Crown on Fire: The Kashmir Problem* (Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1991); M.J. Akbar, *Kashmir: Behind the Valley* (New Delhi: Viking, 1991); Manoj Joshi, *The Lost Rebellion: Kashmir in the Nineties* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1991).

scholarship has foregrounded the longer histories of religious, regional and national identity formation in Kashmir during the pre-colonial, colonial and early postcolonial periods and how those have shaped its political developments in the second half of the twentieth century.[96] Through these works, we have come to a richer understanding of the internal dynamics within the state of Jammu and Kashmir—amongst diverse regional, ethnic, and religious communities, on both sides of the India-Pakistan divide. Moving away from an exclusive Kashmir Valley-centric perspective, scholars have examined the varying trajectories of the regions within the state—Jammu, Pakistan-administered Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Ladakh. These works have argued that these regions are integral to understanding the conflict, as the Kashmir Valley must be understood as part of the broader dynamics in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and in South Asia and beyond. My dissertation builds on this scholarly attention to the internal dynamics of the state, and does so with an attempt to foreground state-formation and state-society relations in the early postcolonial period.

Within Kashmir historiography, scholars have understood the Naya Kashmir manifesto as "the most important document in modern Kashmir's history" as well as "an exceptionally radical political programme."[97] It was to offer a fundamentally different vision of political and social life for the state's citizens than they had experienced under Dogra rule. For example, Sumantra Bose details the "Jacobin conception of popular sovereignty" the manifesto highlights, and how land reform, in particular, led "hundreds of thousands of newly empowered families" to see the

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[96] Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*; Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*; Chowdhary, *Jammu and Kashmir*; Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict and International Dispute;* Christopher Snedden, *Kashmir: The Untold Story (*New Delhi: Harper Collins, 2013); Cabeiri deBergh Robinson, *Body of Victim, Body of Warrior: Refugee Families and the Making of Kashmiri Jihadists* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013); Ravina Aggarwal, *Beyond Lines of Control: Performance and Politics on the Disputed Borders of Ladakh, India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

[97] Sumantra Bose, *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003) 25; Andrew Whitehead, "The People's Militia: Communists and Kashmiri Nationalism in the 1940s," *Twentieth Century Communism: A Journal of International History*, 2, (2010), 144; Josef Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966) 202-205.

Sheikh as a "messiah."[98] However, he also describes how the National Conference's vision of governance was "in tension with liberal democratic norms of political pluralism, accountability, and tolerance of dissent….deeply authoritarian."[99] Sumit Ganguly agrees that the National Conference under the Naya Kashmir was "populist but not democratic," as power was concentrated at the hands of the Sheikh, and there was little room for internal dissent.[100] Rekha Chowdhury has a more detailed analysis of the Naya Kashmir manifesto. She describes it as a new form of politics, "devoid of religion," that "created a sense of political collectivity that was to inform Kashmir for time to come."[101] The implementation of land reform, in particular, had an impact on the psyche of the peasants, who became enthused under its changes. Chowdhury situates Naya Kashmir not just as the "ideological instrument" of the National Conference, but acquiring "the status of the political creed of society." She suggests that it had buy-in from the Kashmiri masses, and was not just a project of the state.[102] Its importance was that it shifted the political discourse from one that focused primarily on religion (of the Muslim Conference) to one that focused on issues of class.

Chowdhury's assessment of Naya Kashmir serving as a "political creed of society" is important, and a point I will expand upon in this dissertation. Nevertheless, in Chowdhury's or other scholarly works, there has been no detailed assessment of Naya Kashmir beyond the context in which it emerged in the late colonial period, what it envisioned, and the land reform policies of Sheikh Abdullah's government. Indeed, there has been an overreliance on understanding Naya Kashmir only through the prism of Sheikh Abdullah, a perspective that I argue limits our understandings of it as a program, policy, and set of practices in the post-1953

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98 Bose, *Roots of Conflict*, 28.
99 Bose, *Roots of Conflict,* 27.
100 Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir*, 33.
101 Chowdhury, *Jammu and Kashmir,* 13.
102 Chowdhury, *Jammu and Kashmir,* 14.

period and its implications for state formation in the early postcolonial period. My dissertation extends Naya Kashmir into Bakshi's government, when I contend that it was converted from being a party's manifesto to a state-building project of reform. This perspective allows us to see how a particular vision for constructing a new Kashmir was being implemented, its deeper legacies beyond the 1947 divide, and its impact on people's relationship to the state and to each other. In doing so, I suggest that only seeing Naya Kashmir in non-religious and/or class terms restricts our understanding of the ways in which it impacted community identities and transformed relationships between various communities. In other words, a manifesto that was "devoid of religion," and intended for all regions of the state, produced a different reality on the ground in the context of Kashmir's unresolved political status and the local state's emphasis on Kashmiri Muslims, a group that was both regional *and* religious.

My dissertation also brings the Bakshi period to the forefront of understanding Kashmir's early postcolonial history. A vast majority of scholarly work has focused on Sheikh Abdullah and his role in Kashmiri politics. Indeed, because of the Sheikh's role in shaping the Naya Kashmir manifesto and his towering role in politics during Partition, in some works, the Sheikh is credited for developments that actually happened under Bakshi's government, including providing free education in Kashmir.[103] There has been no scholarly work that has discussed Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad and his tenure as Prime Minister in its entirety. Those that have covered some aspects of his rule, or looked at the early postcolonial period in Kashmir, have primarily examined it through the lens of center-state relations. Bakshi's government is usually characterized as the first in a series of governments through which the Indian state attempted to

[103]Giving Sheikh Abdullah the credit for implementing the policy of free education is a recurring theme in a number of works. See Shahzada Akhter, *Kashmir Women Empowerment and National Conference* (Srinagar: Jay Kay Books, 2011) 142; Gull Mohamad Wani, "Political Assertion of Kashmiri Identity," in Nyla Ali Khan (ed), *The Parchment of Kashmir: History, Society and Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012) 138.

erode Kashmir's autonomy, a process that Sheikh Abdullah had withstood, leading to the eventual disenchantment of Kashmiris from the Indian Union. For example, Sumantra Bose describes Bakshi's term in office as strongly suggesting "a contractual relationship between Bakshi and the government of India, whereby he would be allowed to run an unrepresentative, unaccountable government in Srinagar in return for facilitating [Kashmir's] 'integration' with India on New Delhi's terms."[104] Alastair Lamb describes the Bakshi period as one in which Kashmir "started drifting steadily into the Indian orbit."[105] As a result of this "contractual relationship" envisioned as being merely instrumental rather than towards democratic ends, scholars have focused on the level of political repression, corruption, and "mafia-style authoritarianism" of the local government.[106] Rekha Chowdhary, for example, describes the "unscrupulous political tactics to deal with any kind of opposition or dissent against the ruling party," including the use of a private army called the Peace Brigade.[107] She also describes how the National Conference controlled the electoral machinery, and that there was no space for democratic debate.

Alternatively, other scholars have argued that Bakshi's government provided the state with one of the longest periods of stability. This is primarily because both Bakshi and the Government of India foregrounded economic prosperity in the state, in an effort to show Kashmiris the benefits of integration with India, so that they would not continue to demand a plebiscite. To ensure political stability, India gave Bakshi financial assistance to develop the state. For example, Rekha Chowdhary contends that in overcoming their crisis of legitimacy in

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[104] Bose, *Roots of Conflict*, 68.
[105] Lamb, *Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy*, 71-72.
[106] Bose, *Roots of Conflict,* 72. Sumit Ganguly describes Bakshi's government as showing "scant regard for tolerating honest dissent, squelched civil liberties, and engaged in widespread electoral malpractice. See Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir*, 43.
[107] Chowdhary, *Jammu and Kashmir,* 34.

the state, "Bakshi and his successors started creating a false sense of economic well-being with the help of liberal central aid. Keeping the political situation of the state in the post-1953 period in view, the central government had started pumping money in the state."[108] Chowdhary describes how this took place through loans that were to be used to develop infrastructure, build schools and colleges, and provide scholarships and employment. Navnita Behera also describes how Bakshi created a highly centralized and authoritarian state apparatus through which his government, with the help of financial aid from the Government of India, was able to "penetrate all political, economic, administrative and social spheres of society," as well as fill state institutions with personal political appointees.[109] The bureaucracy, according to Behera, was used as an instrument of politics. Yet, this stability was not to last long. Most scholars conclude that the increasingly undemocratic, repressive, corrupt, and highly coercive nature of Bakshi's government, as well as the erosion of Article 370 that happened under his rule, led once more to increasing anti-Indian sentiments.[110]

This dissertation intervenes in the study of the Bakshi period in a number of ways. Most importantly, it seeks to disrupt the exclusive prism of India-Kashmir/center-state interactions upon which much of the existing scholarship on the Bakshi period has relied. To be sure, the overarching context of Bakshi needing to gain legitimacy for Kashmir's accession to India is crucial to understanding this period, but an exclusive focus on the "contractual relationship" keeps us from seeing the ways in which the state government was also attempting to implement Naya Kashmir, a local project of socio-cultural reform that had its roots in the pre-Partition period. Foregrounding India's role as a hegemonic, paternal state and Bakshi as an obedient, willing collaborator who was simply implementing the demands of the Government of India,

[108] Chowdhary, *Jammu and Kashmir*, 80.
[109] Behera, *State, Identity and Violence,* 107-108.
[110] Behera, *State, Identity, and Violence,* 114.

overlooks the intricacies of local politics and negotiations that traced their roots well before 1947, as well as the agency of local actors. In particular, we still have little sense of the policies that Bakshi implemented, how the state government managed to consolidate its authority, and what were some of the consequences—intended or otherwise—of the state building project. I contend that we must examine the internal compulsions—the needs, aspirations, and demands of various communities and regions within the state as well as the state's leadership—as much as the external ones (the demands of the Government of India or Cold War politics). In doing so, I argue that the state government in this period must be differentiated from the Government of India. In foregrounding the role of the state government, I show how it was not simply taking orders from the latter, but was agentive in attempting to consolidate its own legitimacy, on its own terms, outside of the dynamics of India-Pakistan relations. While the state government had to bear in mind the broader compulsions of the Government of India, my dissertation reveals how in its day-to-day affairs, it had flexibility in drafting and implementing its own policies, including in economic development, education, and cultural reform, as well as determining how to deal with dissent. It was the primary driver for socio-cultural developments in Kashmir's early postcolonial period. Since Kashmiri Muslims were important constituents of the state government and its varying institutions after the end of Dogra rule, my dissertation also reveals that while they were denied the right to participate in a plebiscite to determine the future of their state, they were imbued with agency in determining their socio-economic and cultural realities. Although they may have been restricted within broader political processes, my last chapter especially highlights how Kashmiri Muslims themselves were at the forefront of creating and implementing state policies and negotiating their roles within the institutional mechanisms that were available to them.

In sum, my dissertation aims to shift the focus from center-state relations to an emphasis on state-society relations. This brings our attention to the state's enduring functioning—the making instead of the unmaking of the state. How did a government that came to power in an illegitimate coup manage to remain in power for a decade? The answer to this question lies in the nature of the everyday state. I am deeply indebted to a recent strand in South Asian historiography that examines governance and state building in the immediate post-Partition moment, as well as the role of the everyday postcolonial state and state/society relations.[111] This historiography challenges simplistic divisions of the state vs. society paradigm. As Srirupa Roy argues in *Beyond Belief: Indian and the Politics of Post-colonial Nationalism,* the state is not as monolithic or coherent as accounts of its reach make it out to be.[112] Through Roy's study of state institutions and practices such as the Films Division of India and commemorations of India's Republic Day, this perspective on the state allows us to envision spaces where the "dominant ideologies of nationhood are reproduced and sustained not just by state officials and institutions but also through the "co-productions," strategic appropriations, and contestations of non-state actors."[113] For example, my investigation of the educational policies of the state in Chapter Two shows how various communities on the ground took up and appropriated these policies, and positioned themselves as their primary beneficiaries. In a similar vein, the essays in the edited volume, *From Subjects to Citizens: Society and the Everyday State in India and Pakistan, 1947-1970,* show the processes by which state and "elite ideologies and institutions are interpreted, translated, and manipulated at the quotidian level by men and women as they negotiate their

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[111] Taylor Sherman, William Gould and Sarah Ansari's *From Subjects to Citizens: Society and the Everyday State in India and Pakistan, 1947-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Srirupa Roy, *Beyond Belief: India and the Politics of Postcolonial Nationalism (*Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).
[112] Roy, *Beyond Belief.*
[113] Ibid, ix-xi.

lives."[114] I show how this takes place through institutions—educational, economic, and cultural—by looking into how people responded to, were shaped by, and resisted these policies. Yet, they did so in a context in which the state government was not just dealing with the same issues that the other states or territories in the two nation-states of India and Pakistan were grappling with, but rather, was also compelled in large part due to its "disputed" and unresolved political status. It is this perspective on how Kashmir's broader political context impacted the project of state building that I bring to the literature on postcolonial state formation in the subcontinent.

Sources and Organization of the Dissertation

I conducted my research primarily in Srinagar, Kashmir, with a short interlude at the Nehru Memorial Library in New Delhi. My visit to the National Archives of India proved unproductive as all files relating to Kashmir after 1924 were inaccessible. Thus, a primary limitation of my research is that I was not able to see direct correspondence between the Government of India and Bakshi and/or the Jammu and Kashmir state. At the Jammu and Kashmir State Archives in Srinagar, I examined bureaucratic correspondence from the Department of Education and Information as well as administrative reports and government propaganda. Finally, to bring forth diverse Kashmiri Muslim voices, I collected a number of published memoirs and literary works through various local libraries, bookstores, and private collections. In addition, I conducted twenty-five oral interviews with individuals who were either students in local colleges or members of the state bureaucracy at the time, on their memories of the Bakshi period.

The first, second and third chapters of this dissertation lay out the government's policies---informed by its internal and external compulsions—in the economic, educational, and cultural

[114] Sherman et al., *From Subjects to Citizens*, 1.

domain. The first chapter, which incorporates five-year plans, tourist guides, administrative and budget reports, political speeches, Indian and international media reports, and state propaganda materials, draws attention to the unique set of political compulsions Bakshi's government faced, and how the region's developmentalist policies reflected these compulsions. I argue that Kashmir's disputed political status engendered a form of developmentalism that focused more on short-term strategic interests, rather than long-term economic growth. As a result, Naya Kashmir's economic goals of self-sufficiency were undermined as the state became increasingly dependent on the Government of India.

The second chapter uses education plans and reports, as well as college journals, memoirs and oral interviews, to examine the state's education policies. I argue that educational policy was the cornerstone of constructing a modern, secular Kashmiri subject. However, because the government targeted Kashmiri Muslims as its principal beneficiaries, the educational policies of the state created tensions between and amongst Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits, leading the latter to bring the government's secular credentials into question.

The third chapter looks at poems, shorts stories, novels, cultural journals, and bureaucratic correspondence to explore the state's attempts to revitalize Kashmiri culture. It reveals the role of the cultural intelligentsia in Kashmir in buttressing the state's national project and constructing a Kashmiri cultural identity. At the same time, I argue that the bureaucratization of culture produced its own contradictions in eliciting conformity and resistance, highlighting the extent to which dissent is always integral to cultural reform projects.

My fourth chapter focuses on the workings of dissent and repression. I argue that the local state was at the forefront of repression against those individuals and groups that challenged the government's stance on Kashmir's political status. Repressive practices of the state led to an

enduring state of emergency. Nonetheless, it is under Bakshi that a popular and organized post-Partition indigenous resistance emerged, one that was eventually folded into the political mainstream.

While the first four chapters are centered on state policies, my fifth chapter uses memoirs, autobiographies, and oral histories to examine the impact of the state's policies within Kashmiri Muslim society at the time and how Naya Kashmir is remembered today. By invoking both the openings and closings Naya Kashmir engendered, these narratives underscore the ambivalences that marked this period and how it is recalled.

Chapter One

State-led Developmentalism and the Pursuit of Progress

Introduction

In the mid-1950s, just a few years into Bakshi's tenure as Prime Minister of the state, a number of Indian and international journalists visited Kashmir to observe social and political developments in the disputed state. Hosted by the state's Department of Information, they visited newly built schools, large-scale development projects, tourist areas, and accompanied Bakshi on his tours throughout the region.[115] Their accounts of Kashmir under Bakshi were largely positive, and in some cases, nearly euphoric. A number of journalists reported on the economic progress in the state, taking note of shifts in land reform, transportation, employment, irrigation, agriculture, industry, and food availability.

A.M Rosenthal, the *New York Times* special correspondent who travelled to Kashmir in 1955 wrote that, "the road over the Banihal Pass, Indian Kashmir's only land link with the outside world, has been widened and improved. Indian civil planes fly in and out of Srinagar's airport everyday. In the Sindh Valley a hydro-electric plant, the first to be built in almost half a century, will open this summer."[116] Speaking of his trip to parts of rural Kashmir, Rosenthal emphasized, "The people of the poor and once forgotten villages have begun to have demands. Not long ago, they not only did not demand but did not know that better things were theirs by

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[115] "Transport Facilities and Issue of Press Cards to Press Correspondents," in Accession Register No: 282 of 1954-55, Department of Information and Broadcasting, Srinagar State Archives.

[116] "Kashmir Through Many Eyes," Lalla Rookh Publications, Department of Information and Broadcasting, Accession No: 56206, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, 3.

human right. The people are getting many of their demands fulfilled and the pace is faster than ever before in Kashmir history."[117] A few reports also made note of the increase in tourist traffic in the state. For example, *The Economist London* reported: "Kashmir is booming. There have never been so many tourists and they have never brought so much. This year, 70,000 tourists are expected. These tourists do not fish and trek…as British officers used to do but they spend far more on embroidery and silk and occasionally, tables."[118]

In addition to praise for development activities, a number of journalists wrote of Bakshi's personable and accessible personality. Taya Zinkin, a correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, accompanied Bakshi on a regional tour in 1956. In an article of her time in Kashmir, she stated, "The relations between Bakshi…and his people are unique in India. The people's familiarity is such that it can at times be embarrassing, indeed even dangerous. There are no policemen, no bamboo enclosures; everyone can, like the beggar woman or the madman cram nearer and nearer the platform."[119] Positing Bakshi as a well-liked, populist leader, she continued that touring with him "requires a sturdy constitution and all round athletics from knowing how to ride, swim, and climb to the art of elbowing ones way out from an over-enthusiastic concourse of friendly and overpoweringly persistent welcomers."[120] Zinkin noted that despite having a fractured leg, Bakshi would walk five additional miles if people in a locality wanted him to see something that was not on his program: "His people will not take 'no' for an answer. When one remembers that [he] tours his parish three days a week, for 17 hours a day, one will agree with the little boy who, after just an afternoon with Bakshi…concluded, it is

[117] Ibid.
[118] Special Correspondent, *The Economist London*, November 22, 1956 in *Kashmir: An Open Book,* Lalla Rookh Publications, Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir, 6.
[119] "Kashmir Through Many Eyes," 8.
[120] Ibid.

terrible to be Prime Minister."[121] To be sure, Bakshi's ability to interact freely with the crowd took a number of observers by surprise. "The Prime Minister moved unescorted among crowds who garlanded him, and peasants showered lumps of sugar, signifying a sweet welcome, on his car. While everywhere there were shouts of "long live" and women sang, "our bread-winner has come."[122]

While these accounts are from a number of international outlets, Indian papers, too, spoke positively of Bakshi's government, its allegiance to India, and its emphasis on economic progress that had brought together Kashmiris from all walks of life to bring forth a modernizing, socialist order. A political correspondent for the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* declared that, "Conscious of the fact that mass support for them could depend on how expeditiously and effectively relief was provided for the people, the [Kashmiri] leaders took speedy decisions and introduced a number of economic reforms."[123] The emphasis on economic reforms led one commentator to claim, "Going around the countryside either in Jammu or in Kashmir province, one no longer finds people obsessed with politics. Instead of people's grievances, one hears demands for opportunities to develop their towns and villages and to improve their living conditions."[124] Moreover, "the cultivator, businessman and administrator are all busy with tasks connected with greater production of food, expanded trade and planned constructive activity."[125] Implicit in these observations was an understanding that this new emphasis on economic development was intended to set aside local concerns for Kashmir's *political* future and instead, as the Amrita Bazar Patrika correspondent suggested, obtain political loyalty for the new government.

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[121] Ibid.
[122] Special Representative, *Sunday Times London*, July 26th 1955, in *Kashmir: an Open Book*, 5.
[123] Political Correspondent, *Amrita Bazar Patrika,* March 1955, in "Kashmir Through Many Eyes," 1.
[124] DN Kalhan, "Report on Kashmir," Originally Published in *Hindustan Times*, Reprinted by Lalla Rookh Publications, Srinagar: Kashmir, 1955, 14.
[125] Ibid.

A few years prior to these news reports, Bakshi's government faced a crisis of legitimacy after coming to power in the wake of Sheikh Abdullah's arrest. Given the "larger than life" persona the Sheikh had managed to cultivate as the sole representative of Kashmiris, the crisis of legitimacy was not just limited to being within the state; it reverberated within India and in the international arena. A number of prominent international newspapers criticized the Government of India for forcibly removing Sheikh Abdullah. Newspapers in the United States and Europe questioned the sincerity of "Nehru's devotion to peace and justice," and one Swedish paper even went so far as to say, "home-made imperialism has replaced European imperialism."[126] International reports asserted that the new government was not popular, and that Kashmiris were becoming more inclined towards Pakistan. In one such example, the correspondent for the *New York Times* reported that "one thing is obvious: the present government of Kashmir is not an instrument of popular will."[127] Within India as well, there was much confusion over the political desires of Kashmiris and the mysteries surrounding the fall of the Sheikh, who had played such a critical role in bringing Kashmir to India. Perceptions of political instability led tourism to drop to a standstill. Furthermore, the world powers were still debating the question of the future of Kashmir in the international arena, with the option of plebiscite still looming large. All of these developments created a heightened sense of political instability in the region. As a result, Bakshi had to not only obtain legitimacy for his government within Kashmir, but also had to counter adverse narratives on an international scale.

In addition to creating legitimacy for its rule—both locally and internationally—the new government had an even greater task at hand. It had to set itself as more economically

[126] Comments from Morgan Tidnegan, a Swedish Government Party Paper, Accessed from collection of "Kashmir Newspaper Clippings" in Sapru House (Indian Council of World Affairs), New Delhi, India.
[127] Comments from the *New York Times*, Accessed from collection of "Kashmir Newspaper Clippings" in Sapru House (Indian Council of World Affairs), New Delhi, India.

progressive than the governments of its predecessors—Sheikh Abdullah and Maharaja Hari Singh—and fulfill its promises of economic transformation made during Bakshi's radio address to the state after the Sheikh's arrest. As we will see, even Sheikh Abdullah's government had certain political compulsions when pursuing particular development policies; his were to gain greater support for the National Conference and societal approval of Kashmir's accession to India. However, the Sheikh was not interested in increased financial, legal, and economic integration with the Government of India, preferring Kashmir to have greater autonomy. Bakshi was also concerned about the finality of the accession as well as securing the position of the new government. Yet, there were a number of ways in which Bakshi departed from his predecessor, most explicitly in creating greater economic ties between the Government of India and the Jammu and Kashmir state. Bakshi differed from the Sheikh in that he saw financial integration as imperative to addressing Kashmir's economic concerns, which, if increased, would cause greater political upheaval than what had existed at the time of Sheikh Abdullah's arrest. As a result, in order to create economic betterment for Kashmir's peasants, workers, and artisans, Bakshi was able to fulfill a number of development policies as envisaged in the Naya Kashmir manifesto, and initiated under Sheikh Abdullah's government.

This chapter situates economic planning at the center of Bakshi's state-led reform project. It details the economic policies of the new government, in the context of both the Naya Kashmir manifesto's economic blueprint, as well as the state's internal and external compulsions. It examines how his government looked to economic planning not just as a way to create political stability and project Kashmir as a state for socialist postcolonial development for concerned local, Indian, and international audiences, but also as a means to usher in an era of postcolonial modernization and development—to bring forth a new Kashmir. Bakshi became the

"architect of modern Kashmir;" indeed, as we will see in this chapter, Kashmir entered a "golden-age" of large-scale modernization, including agricultural reform, industrial development, infrastructural growth, tourism and increased employment opportunities. In addition to these changes, developmentalist discourse, imbibed in the state's five-year plans, permeated the state's bureaucracy, and especially the Department of Information, the state's propaganda arm, which was tasked with promoting Kashmir's golden-age of development to multiple audiences.[128] In drawing attention to the unique set of political compulsions Bakshi's government faced, and how the region's developmentalist policies reflected these compulsions, I argue that Kashmir's disputed political status engendered a form of developmentalism that focused more on short-term strategic interests, rather than long-term economic growth. As a result, Naya Kashmir's economic goals of self-sufficiency were undermined as the state became increasingly dependent on the Government of India.

This chapter provides an important context for the larger dissertation with its focus on the distinct developmentalist policies of the Jammu and Kashmir state in the post-Partition period, as it navigated Kashmir's political context as well as attempted to address local economic concerns. While the Government of India provided substantial financial aid, the state government was at the forefront of framing economic and developmental strategy, ensuring that the state was able to implement the economic goals of Naya Kashmir. This chapter also provides insight into state-society relations, and the ways in which people's demands for a better standard of living were

[128] The term "Developmentalism," as I use it in this chapter, places economic development at the center of political life and is also a means for the state to establish legitimacy. I place emphasis on both the discursive and actualized (in terms of policy) aspects of developmentalism. As David Ludden argues, development discourse enhances state power, and allows the state to exert directive power in human affairs. While states may have varying intended outcomes, the economic logic of developmentalism lies in its ability to demand state intervention and international assistance—usually through the transfer of Western technology and rationality. See David Ludden, "India's Development Regime," in *Colonialism and Culture*, N. Dirks ed., (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992) 247-288; Hamza Alavi and Teodor Shanin (ed), *Introduction to the Sociology of "Developing Societies"* (London: Palgrave, 1982).

reflected in the policies of the state. Furthermore, it was not just the economic policies of the state that were crucial to the state's plans, but also, and equally, the proliferation of the discourses of developmentalism outside of Kashmir.

This chapter is divided into five sections. In the first section, I briefly examine the literature on economic development in Kashmir, and situate my intervention in relation to this literature. In the second section, I provide an overview of Naya Kashmir's economic plan, and the socio-economic context for Bakshi's development planning, including the dire economic conditions that pervaded under Sheikh Abdullah's government, and the ways in which Bakshi rhetorically and practically attempted to foreground economic concerns in the wake of Sheikh Abdullah's arrest. The third section shows the tensions between the state's increased dependence on aid from the Government of India and its attempt to implement a series of economic measures under the manifesto. The fourth section shows how developmentalist discourse incorporated tourism and even Indian cinema to project progress and modernization to critical Indian and international observers. It also examines state propaganda efforts geared towards an international audience that included a number of Muslim-majority countries and the Soviet Union. Finally, in the last section, I examine the fraught realities of "progress" as evidenced by increasing corruption, highlighting how the political compulsions of these economic policies actually hindered progress on the ground. I conclude by examining the impact of Bakshi's economic policies.

The Political Compulsions of Development

A limited number of studies on economic development in Kashmir have attempted to locate economic causes for the militancy of the 1980s, arguing that economic development

measures taken by the post-47 governments contributed in part to the militancy.[129] Siddhartha Prakash argues that state interventions in agriculture and industry were constantly subjected to the pressures and pulls of various interest groups so that policies that were conceived to benefit the broader society were often implemented by a small group of the population for their own benefit.[130] As this group began to get richer at the expense of the poor, "militancy and the dream of an independent state began to have its own appeal."[131] Sumit Ganguly provides a different argument for the impact of economic development. He contends that modernization in the context of Kashmir was uneven; while economic development certainly occurred and introduced Kashmir to possibilities of alternative futures, the political process choked off such possibilities because economic development and political mobilization didn't go hand in hand. Both Ganguly and Prakash examine how developmentalist policies led to militancy. Ganguly's account shows how it was the *lack* of political development that undermined economic development. Prakash's account argues that it was a particular type of economic development that occurred in Kashmir, one in which the bureaucratic and elite classes were able to benefit, while others were not. Ganguly's account does not take into account the fact that economic development in Kashmir *was* political—it was not just the lack of political mobilization that undermined economic development, but rather, developmentalist policies were already undermined as a result of Kashmir's political context, as the state promoted short-term economic interests over long term economic growth. While Prakash accounts for the shortsightedness of the state government, his account simply portrays the government as a set of corrupt bureaucratic and elite actors

[129] See Sumit Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir: Portents of War, Hopes of Peace* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Navnita Chadha Behera, *State, Identity and Violence: Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh* (Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 2000); Siddhartha Prakash, "The Political Economy of Kashmir Since 1947," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 35, 24 (10 June, 2000) 1.
[130] Prakash, "The Political Economy of Kashmir since 1947."
[131] Ibid.

attempting to benefit themselves and various interest groups at the expense of the poor, without an understanding of the political context for why the state government had to resort to these policies. Indeed, what what he labels as "economic mismanagement and political nepotism," was a concerted economic plan of the state government.[132] What is missing from both accounts is any understanding or engagement with the political compulsions for various economic development policies. Furthermore, both accounts fail to consider the actual economic aims of the state government, and the historical trajectory that led the state government to adopt a certain set of policies. This chapter will address the lacunae in studies of developmentalism in Kashmir by foregrounding how Kashmir's disputed status impacted the nature of developmentalism—both as a set of practices and discourses—in the state and the execution of the Naya Kashmir manifesto.

From Sheikh Abdullah to Bakshi

Developmentalism in post-1947 Kashmir occurred in the broader context of decolonization and Cold War politics. Because of the perceived successes of Soviet-style planning, the ideology of state-led modernization captured the imagination of political elites throughout the Third World, including South Asia.[133] Kashmiri political elites, including both Sheikh Abdullah and Bakshi, were influenced by leftists and communists in the Indian subcontinent and were undoubtedly swept up in this fervor. They were part of the drafting of the National Conferences' Naya Kashmir manifesto in 1944, which relied heavily on Soviet-styled economic policy planning. Having witnessed the economic marginalization of Kashmiris under the Dogras, the National Conference leadership viewed the state as being imbued with the political will and power to crucially transform the lives of its citizens.

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[132] Ibid.

[133] Hansen argues in his introduction that this understanding of the role of the state was embraced by nationalist political elites in the postcolonial world, from across the political spectrum, anxious to transform their states into normal nation-states. See Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat (ed), "Introduction," *States of Imagination: Ethnographic Explorations of the Postcolonial State,* Durham: Duke University Press, 2001,10-13.

The manifesto envisioned a "National Economic Plan" that sought to first, achieve national self-suffiency and second, raise the standard of living for men and women in society. The planned economy of the state was to provide work for all adult able-bodied citizens.[134] The manifesto gave a detailed account of what a "higher standard of living" would entail. It included better nutrition, more clothing, housing, water, lighting, education, provision of food stores, insurance, banking, medical aid, recreation and affordable transportation.[135] Given that the people of the state primarily relied upon agriculture, economic reform revolved around the abolition of landlordism, distributing land to the tiller, and establishing co-operative associations, which would allow for the sale of crops and produce to be regulated. The plan also mentioned that no exports of food would be allowed until "the needs of the state have been provided for, both immediate needs and the needs of a healthy reserve."[136] The state was to achieve self-suffiency in foodstuffs and crops. The plan called for the people's control of forests, in order to ensure that the people of a locality derived the "fullest benefit from forest land."[137] Technological advancements would help in improving the quality and quantity of crops produced, in addition to introducing modern methods of animal husbandry, dairy farming, fruit cultivation, and bee-keeping. The plan also included a "Peasants Charter," which abolished forced labor, debt, and levies and promised the benefit of modern scientific research.

Another economic aim of Naya Kashmir was the development of industry. The plan declared that all industries would be owned by the state and abolished big private capitalism and private monopolies.[138] It allowed for small-scale enterprises as long as they were in conformity with the National Plan. Industries in the state included hydro-electric power, mining, transport,

[134] *New Kashmir*, 23.
[135] *New Kashmir*, 24.
[136] *New Kashmir,* 26.
[137] *New Kashmir,* 26.
[138] *New Kashmir,* 30.

textiles, furniture, medicines, and paper, as well as handicrafts and cottage industries, which included wool, silk, wood, papier mache, rugs, embroidery, metal work, and honey and saffron cultivation.[139] A “Workers Charter” provided for the rights of workers, including the right to participate in trade unions, eight-hour workdays, weekly wages, leave, pension, and the right to recreation.[140] As we can see, the manifesto called for a strong planned economy in an independent state, one that would aim to protect the rights and standard of living of workers and peasants, protect and promote the state’s resources for its own benefit, and most importantly, achieve national self-sufficiency.

Following the partition of the Indian subcontinent, and the accession of Kashmir to India, Kashmir’s economy faced serious challenges, and the Naya Kashmir manifesto had to adjust to new political and economic circumstances. Prior to 1947, Kashmir’s economy was intrinsically linked to the part of Punjab that became a part of Pakistan. While the rivers connecting the two regions provided the mode of transportation for timber, the roads carried fruits, vegetables, carpets, and handicrafts.[141] Partition disrupted trade in 1947, and new avenues for Kashmiri exports had to be created. Furthermore, peasants, who made up nearly ninety percent of Kashmir’s population, suffered from a feudal system of agriculture with levies and heavy taxation under the Dogras.[142] Sheikh Abdullah’s government took a few steps towards the reconstruction of the economy, which was made difficult by the division of the territory, local resistance to the accession, refugee rehabilitation and political problems in Jammu, where the right-wing Praja Parishad was contesting the state’s autonomy and seeking greater integration

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[139] *New Kashmir,* 33.
[140] *New Kashmir*, 34.
[141] Javeed ul Aziz, “Economic History of Modern Kashmir: With Special Reference to Agriculture (1947-1989),” PhD. diss., History, University of Kashmir, 2015, 5.
[142] The condition of the Kashmiri peasants in the late 19th century has been detailed in Walter Lawrences’ *The Valley of Kashmir* (London: London H Frowde, 1895). The Dogras primarily raised taxes as their source of funding.

with India. Given that political stability in the region would be determined by the sentiments of the restive peasantry, the state implemented land reform, one of the major components of the Naya Kashmir manifesto. In 1948, the Kashmiri state abolished *jagirs, muafis,* and *mukarari* lands, except those granted to some religious institutions.[143] This was followed by the Big Landed Estates Abolition act in 1950, which was intended to end landlordism and give the land to the tiller.[144] The fixture on the ceiling of land that each proprietor could hold was established at 22 ¾ acres (equivalent to 182 canals). As a result of this Act, "4.5 lakh acres of land held in excess of 22.75 acres…excluding orchards were expropriated from as many as 9000 and odd land owners, and out of this ownership rights of over 2.31 lakh acres of land were transferred to cultivating peasants."[145] Kashmir became the only state in the Indian subcontinent where such sweeping land reforms occurred without any compensation to the landlord.

Nevertheless, a number of scholars have noted that the reforms were not as far-reaching as is understood.[146] For one thing, the same bureaucracy that existed under the Dogra period was in charge of its implementation, leading to allegations of corruption and favoritism. Landowners

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[143] *Jagirs* were land grants given by the Dogras to political loyalists. *Muafis* were grants of charity to individuals or institutions, while *mukararis* were cash grants given to individuals, saintly people, or institutions. See Javeed ul Aziz, "Economic History of Modern Kashmir," 56-61.
[144] Mohamed Aslam, "Land Reforms in Jammu and Kashmir," *Social Scientist*, 6, 4, (November 1977) 59-64.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Despite the weaknesses of the land reforms, Javeed ul Aziz observes that they did have an important impact on those peasants who benefited. He writes, "The economic emancipation paved way for the social advancement motivating the peasant to educate his children and avail facilities of better health and cultural advancement. The land reforms had other important social consequence as well. They fostered the phenomena of occupational mobility, inter-caste marriages and gradual shift from joint to nuclear family pattern. There are many cases in Kashmir where the whole village or in most cases some particular castes had to depend on alms to feed their families. However, after the land reforms they not only became self sufficient but also their status got markedly improved and some of them progressed more than those who were traditionally rich classes. However, it is interesting to note that in case of Shia sect, land reforms had a negative impact so far as the social status of those who received land was concerned. Since Shias follow their religious leaders (than political leadership) who were beneficiaries of the landlordism they tended to discourage the land transfer declaring it un-Islamic." Those families who were empowered by these reforms would also view Sheikh Abdullah as a "messiah," and provided an everlasting support base to the Sheikh. See Javeed ul Aziz, "Economic History of Modern Kashmir," 89.

were also able to exploit a number of loopholes existent in the law.[147] Well-off families who owned a significant amount of land split up their joint families so that the land was divided amongst multiple family members. Moreover, because orchards and fuel and fodder resources were exempt from the reform, a number of landowners converted their land into these exemptions. Some peasants also received land that was not productive.[148] As Daniel Thorner observed in 1953, the reforms benefited those at the village level who were already important; it did very little for petty tenants and landless laborers. As a result, new forms of rural hierarchies, or neolandlordism, came into being.[149] Furthermore, Javeed ul Aziz and others have noted that the land reforms antagonized a number of Hindus, both in the Kashmir Valley and in Jammu, who were among the primary beneficiaries of the feudal system under the Dogras. In some quarters, the land reforms were seen as "communal" given that they benefited a largely Muslim peasantry. This sentiment led to the popularity of groups such as the Praja Parishad.

Nonetheless, it was the political benefits of land reform that were more far-reaching than the logistics of its actual implementation. Beginning in the last few years of Dogra rule when the National Conference faced opposition from the Muslim Conference, and up until the years of Sheikh Abdullah's government, the party needed support in order to fight against the Dogras, and later, accede to India. M. Aslam declares that, "in order to enlist support of [the] downtrodden masses…[it] became obligatory on [the] part of [the] National Conference leadership to promise some economic gains to them so that they could mobilize the people for political struggle."[150] Land reforms resulted in strengthening the political and social base of the National Conference, especially in rural areas.

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[147]Daniel Thorner, "Kashmir Land Reforms: Some Personal Impressions", *Economic and Political Weekly,* (12 Sept, 1953); Mohamed Aslam, "Land Reforms in Jammu and Kashmir."
[148] Thorner, "Kashmir Land Reforms," 999.
[149] Thorner, "Kashmir Land Reforms," 1002.
[150] Aslam, "Land Reforms in Jammu and Kashmir," 86.

In 1950, the state had one of the lowest per capita incomes and consumption levels in the subcontinent.[151] Despite this, keeping with the manifesto's call for self-sufficiency, the Sheikh was determined to keep Kashmir financially independent from the Government of India; this is evidenced by the fact that he had to broaden the tax base of the state instead of being dependent on external assistance. As a result, food prices rose as no imports were allowed in, and custom duties and costs of living became high. Peasants were also forced to give a large percentage of their paddy to the state. At the eve of his arrest, the state suffered from a number of economic crises.

In many ways, there are continuities in the development policies between Bakshi's and the Sheikh's governments, particularly in terms of conceptualizing post-Dogra Kashmir as in need of economic development. However, Bakshi saw the 1953 arrest as a critical turning point that would determine the future political and economic stability of Kashmir. As we will see below, his economic vision for the state was very different from the Sheikh's and indeed, from the manifesto, in that he viewed economic integration with India as the only means to promote the overall aims of Naya Kashmir. In other words, he was willing to compromise on the primary aim of "national self-sufficiency," in order to achieve the secondary aim: a higher standard of living for the people of the state. As a result, he pursued a number of policies distinct from his predecessor and this became central to his government's self-fashioning.

While the intrigues surrounding the Sheikh's arrest and the subsequent protests were covered in the introduction, one of the important points to foreground is that members of the new government also saw progressive economic development as a means to secure support from people in the state to remain with India. As Iffat Malik argues, "Both Bakshi and the Indian government realized that…the only way the people of Kashmir could be kept under control and

[151] Javeed ul Aziz, "Economic History of Modern Kashmir," 69.

convinced of the merits of closer ties with India, was to provide the region with economic prosperity."[152] This was an underlying compulsion that informed the government's economic development policies. Bakshi observed that the political situation was simmering, and that there was deep-seated dissatisfaction towards post-47 political developments in the region. The Government of India, keen to ensure the permanence of Kashmir's accession to India, was also well aware of these developments, and understood the importance of economic aid. Given the local outcry after the Sheikh's arrest, members of the new government understood that its legitimacy was in question in the state, especially given that it had come to power through undemocratic means. Shifting the discourse from one of political grievances to exclusively economic ones, and articulating an ambitious economic plan, would enable the new government to not only implement Naya Kashmir, but to exclusively be in the position to address these concerns and assert its authority.

The day after Bakshi came to power, he broadcast a speech on Radio Kashmir to explain the reasons behind the Sheikh's arrest and removal. He responded strongly to international and local criticism, arguing, "Personal relations are…subordinate to paramount interests of [the] country."[153] He accused the Sheikh of threatening to disintegrate Kashmir and make it a pawn in international power politics. In his speech, however, he foregrounded the economic reasons that led to the Sheikh's arrest.[154] He detailed the economic crisis the state faced, and most especially the pitiable state of the peasants that continued to be taxed under the *mujawaza*. It was an

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[152] Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict and International Dispute*, 108.

[153] Directorate of Information and Broadcasting, "Crisis in Kashmir Explained," Text of the Policy Speech Broadcast by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir on August 9, 1953 (Srinagar, Lalla Rookh Publications, 1953).

[154] The political factors were that the Sheikh and a number of other leading Kashmiri officials were starting to consider the idea of an "independent Kashmir," or at the very least a political solution that would ensure the greatest amount of autonomy for Kashmir. Growing increasingly disillusioned by the way in which the Indian state was seeking greater integration, some members of the state's administration and bureaucracy were questioning the state's accession to India.

important shift in which the problem of Kashmir became one of its economic miseries instead of its future political status between India or Pakistan. He declared that the "key to the present crisis lies in the deep-rooted economic discontent of the masses of the state. This crisis cannot be overcome by the termination of the state's association with India or by merger…with Pakistan."[155] The largest problem that confronted his administration he said, was not of any political or military nature, but "of eliminating the economic distress which has been on the increase since 1947 and is today *at its worst*."[156] He emphasized that Kashmir would benefit from its economic ties with India given that there was an "urgent need to pay attention to the economic reconstruction of the state."[157] Making reference to the progressive economic policies of the Indian state in comparison to the feudal landlordism that had overtaken Pakistan, he reasoned, "Can there be a better position of security or more honorable status for a small state with its poor resources, backward economy and complex geographical situation?"[158] Economic development was thus to serve as a panacea to overcome the state's political concerns, and was also deployed as a reason for the state to merge with India.

The Indian media further developed the foregrounding of economic issues as a rhetorical strategy to overcome political concerns. One correspondent declared that "in order to *retain his hold* over them, Bakshi is calling their attention to their economic interests….change of emphasis is significant and should be welcomed" (emphasis mine).[159] Another correspondent wrote that the task before the new government was that "living standards must be improved…a study of local conditions in Kashmir gave me the impression that *economic considerations may*

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[155] Directorate of Information and Broadcasting, "Crisis in Kashmir Explained," 8.
[156] Directorate of Information and Broadcasting, "Unanimous Vote of Confidence in Bakshi Government- An Account of the Proceedings of the State Legislature on the Motion of Confidence in Bakshi Government Adopted on October 5, 1953 (Srinagar, Lalla Rookh Publications, 1953) 30.
[157] Directorate of Information and Broadcasting, "Crisis in Kashmir Explained," 8.
[158] Directorate of Information and Broadcasting, "Crisis in Kashmir Explained," 4.
[159] "Economic Policies of the Bakshi Government," Accessed from Collection of "Kashmir Newspaper Clippings" in Sapru House (Indian Council of World Affairs), New Delhi, India.

exercise a reasonable amount of influence on the masses in their final choice of association between India and Pakistan" (emphasis mine).[160] These examples suggest that within India, the precariousness of the political question of Kashmir was known, and that there was an understanding of the role that economic development would play.

Large-scale modernization and development required substantial funding. The state's first five-year plan had begun under the Sheikh's government; because of the lack of financial resources and technical infeasibility of the projects, the plan was hardly implemented until Bakshi came to power and revised a series of economic policies of the state and sought greater external aid. After abolishing customs duties, he went on to limit taxation. As mentioned before, Sheikh Abdullah had attempted to maintain a degree of financial autonomy for the Kashmir state, which meant that the state had to establish a variety of taxes in order to broaden its revenue base. Bakshi was well aware that increased taxation was one of the primary reasons for public discontent under the Sheikh's government. Instead, he looked to the Government of India to provide substantial aid for the state to proceed with its development initiatives. He unapologetically defended his government's position on accepting Indian aid, saying that accepting Indian aid entailed that the Kashmiri state did not have to increase taxes, which was sure to cause a strong resistance and create further political instability.[161] Bakshi defended the acceptance of Indian aid by stating that Sheikh Abdullah's government had also taken aid from the Government of India to make up for the difference in the deficit, while his administration was using it exclusively for development. The government estimated that between 1951-1956, it received a total of Rs. 1274.15 lakhs in financial assistance from the Government of India; in

[160] Ibid.
[161] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Aid from India, Text of the Speech of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, Prime Minister, JK in the State Assembly on March 17, 1955", *Kashmir Today Series, II*, Ministry of Information (Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir, 1955).

1956-1961, it received Rs. 3392.07 lakhs; and in 1961-65, it received Rs. 7514.00 lakhs.[162] This amount did not include funding spent on centrally operated and sponsored schemes like the national highway, telegraphs and telephones, broadcasting, regional engineering and medical colleges, tunnels, and regional research laboratories.

In its first iteration, the Indian Planning commission advanced a loan of $14.9 million to the state in December 1953.[163] As Siddharth Prakash details, starting in the 1950s, nearly 90 percent of the state's Five Year Plans were funded by the center, while other backward states such as Bihar received only 70 percent.[164] In addition, during the five-year period between 1957-1962, Kashmir received the highest per capital grant-in-aid—Rs. 41.7— that was almost seven times the average (Rs. 6) for all the other states in the country.[165] At the start of the third five-year plan, the proposed per capita outlay was also the highest for all of the states, which averaged at Rs. 91 against Rs. 141 in Kashmir.[166] As mentioned below, the state received special grants in the form of food subsidies. The state also received additional central assistance for the development of border areas, state police, additional battalions, and border check posts. Furthermore, "central aid has formed an important part of the revenues of the state…indicated by the fact that grants-in-aid contributed 30.7 per cent of the State's revenues against 10 percent for all states."[167] In sum, the Kashmir state was given more grants-in-aid than other states, giving the state less liability than those that received more loans. From these comparisons, it is clear that Kashmir was treated as a special case in the broader context of planning in the country.

[162] "Kashmir in India," Delhi: Caxton Press, 2.
[163] Javeed ul Aziz, "Economic History of Modern Kashmir," 12.
[164] Prakash mentions how this changed in the 1970s, when the center reserved its aid policy to 30% grants and 70% loans. The reason for this shift is not given. Siddharth Prakash, "Political Economy of Kashmir Since 1947," *Economic and Political Weekly*, (June 10, 2000) 2053.
[165] Balraj Puri, "Central Aid to Kashmir: Effect of Finance Commission's Recommendation," *The Economic Weekly* (19 May 1962).
[166] Ibid.
[167] Ibid.

When the overreliance on central government funding caused tension within the Kashmiri legislative assembly, Bakshi defended his government's position vehemently: "We have been receiving aid from India from the very beginning and are receiving it today and shall continue to receive it as long as the conditions make it necessary…I consider it my foremost duty to feed the people well. It is no crime."[168] On another occasion he noted that because the state had limited resources at its disposal "it would have been impossible for us to undertake huge projects if the central government had not allocated generous funds to the state for it's various schemes and programs.[169] In other words, had Kashmir not acceded to India and accepted central government money for its economic projects, Bakshi argued that its economic situation would have remained marginal and the region would continue to remain politically volatile. Here, we see a stark shift from Sheikh Abdullah's government, which had prioritized autonomy over financial integration. We also see how this intensified dependence on aid from the Government of India was a dramatic departure from the goals of creating a self-sufficient state, and created an inherent contradiction in the execution of the Naya Kashmir manifesto. In sum, in abolishing taxes, removing customs duties, and accepting Indian funding for development projects, Bakshi departed from the policies of his predecessors and further integrated Kashmir economically to India.

While we know that the Government of India increased its spending in Kashmir under Bakshi, due to the restrictions on access to files on Kashmir in the National Archives of India, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which the Government of India was implicated in directing the actual course of development planning. As with other Indian states, the Government of India

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[168] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Reply to Critics," *Kashmir Today Series, 1*, Ministry of Information (Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir) 2.

[169] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Text of Speech Broadcast by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad from Radio Kashmir Srinagar on July 26, 1957" (Jammu: Ranbir Government Press, 1957).

would provide a series of economic schemes that state governments were expected to implement. From the Srinagar State Archives, however, it is clear that a number of schemes were drawn up locally, in light of local concerns, while others were implemented upon the request of various ministries in the Government of India. Nonetheless, the local officials were clearly influenced by the discourses of the Nehruvian state's socialist planning, and were often sent on trainings to India and elsewhere on particular economic concerns. What were the new government's economic plans? Who were they targeted towards, and why? How were they similar or different from other regions in India or Pakistan? And how do we understand their impact? It is to these questions we now turn.

The Developmental State: Agriculture, Industry and Infrastructure

Overall, the Bakshi government oversaw either the creation, or implementation, of three five-year plans, which were intended to address the economic crisis within the state. In this section, I use government reports and propaganda to analyze the various policies that were implemented.

Bakshi revitalized the entire bureaucracy to implement the development goals in the First Five Year Plan, which had begun in the last year of Sheikh Abdullah's administration (1952) but had made little progress due to limited funding. Accusing the Sheikh of not consulting with the broader public, Bakshi went on to appoint a series of committees that were tasked with accessing the inefficiencies in policies surrounding food, industry, land reform, and cooperatives, amongst other issues, and determine a new course of action.[170]

Unlike the Indian and Pakistani states, which prioritized state-led industrial development,

[170] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Press Notes, October 15, 1953, Available at Government Press, Srinagar, Kashmir.

the Kashmiri state continued to foreground agricultural reform as it had under the Sheikh.[171] Agriculture was undoubtedly the mainstay of the Kashmir economy as nearly ninety percent of the population depended on it.[172] Not only did the government calculate that it was the large peasantry that was essential to support for its political rule, but it also wanted to implement one of the primary aims of the economic plan under Naya Kashmir. This is an important difference that was unique to Kashmir; agricultural reform was prioritized over industrial development for two reasons: one, because of the political compulsions of needing to appeal to the large peasantry, and two, because of the economic conditions in the state that prevailed under the Dogras.

Informed by the findings of the Wazir Committee, the new government went beyond the previous administration in executing agricultural reform. The committee was established in 1952-53 in an effort to understand the growing economic concerns of the region, but it had been largely ignored by Sheikh Abdullah's government. The Wazir report was a damning account of Sheikh Abdullah's economic policies. It detailed, in particular, the economic woes of the peasantry; it highlighted the "tyranny of the cooperatives" which were established for various commodities, including salt, sugar, and cloth. Inferior items were found in shops, while the best commodities were siphoned off to National Conference workers and ended up in the black market. The committee also detailed the discrepancies in land reform as well as the imposition of paddy procurement on the peasantry (*mujawaza*). Within just a few days of taking power, the Wazir report was given a new life. Because it detailed the economic grievances of the peasantry, the new government was able to use it to develop policies that would ameliorate these

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[171] See Tritkankar Roy, *The Economic History of India 1857-1947,* 288-291 for more on state led industrialization in India.
[172] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Kashmir at a Glance," Available at Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Acc No: 5619, 18.

grievances. Two new crucial policies were implemented: the abolition of *mujawaza* and the subsidization of rice and wheat.

Bakshi ended the system of *mujawaza*, or compulsory procurement. As mentioned above, government cooperatives and private agencies would collect nearly a quarter of food grains from peasants. Officials involved with the cooperatives would then often extort bribes from peasants during collection operations, making them purchase paddy on cash payment from the black market to be handed over to the government procurer. Peasants were forced to mortgage their land and property to raise money for purchasing paddy at black market rates to be handed over to the government. As a result, the price of food grains under Sheikh Abdullah had increased from 1947 onwards.[173] Since, as I mention below, the state was now being subsidized with rice and wheat from the Government of India, there was no need for this forced procurement. A peasant now had the option of selling his paddy to the government, but was not required to do so. Restrictions on purchase of paddy or transporting it to other parts of the Kashmir Valley were also removed. Ration holders also increased by 25,000.[174] The abolition of *mujawaza* lessened tensions between rural and urban dwellers.[175] In addition to the abolition of *mujawaza*, land reform continued under Bakshi. By 1961, nearly eight lakh acres of land had been transferred to tillers, as opposed to 4.5 lakhs under the Sheikh. This meant that around 70,900 Muslim peasants in the Kashmir Valley and 25,000 lower caste Hindus in Jammu became peasant proprietors.[176]

While the abolition of *mujawaza* was aligned with the aims of Naya Kashmir, the state government's reliance on agricultural subsidies from the Government of India was a more complicated affair and shows the ways in which Bakshi's government had to negotiate between

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[173] Raghavan, "Kashmir on the March."
[174] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "A Review of the Achievements of Bakshi Government 1953-54."
[175] "Kashmir After August 9, 1953," *Amrit Bazar Patrika*, 14.
[176] Javeed ul Aziz, "Economic History of Modern Kashmir."

the two aims of maintaining political stability but also executing Naya Kashmir. Immediately after Sheikh Abdullah's arrest, the state received agricultural subsidies from the Government of India, which drastically decreased the price of rice and grains. It was estimated that rice subsidies under Sheikh Abdullah were nineteen lakh rupees; under Bakshi, the cost, which was met almost entirely by assistance from the Government of India, reached 150 lakh rupees per year.[177] As a result, in some areas, the price of rice went from 60-70 rupees per standard unit of measure (khirwar) to eight.[178] Immediately after Bakshi took power, the Government of India made an emergency allotment of seven lakh maunds of rice. Nearly 900 vehicles were utilized to bring the rice from Pathancoat to Srinagar.[179] This was, indeed, a critical step taken by the new government. For a peasantry that had suffered a severe shortage of grains in the 1920s, as well as increased prices under the black market during the Sheikh's government, these subsidies were a welcome and immediate relief.[180] The price of rice and paddy was finally within the reach of the consumer's purchasing power.

Subsidization of rice and wheat in Kashmir was in sharp contrast to the Government of India's overall food policy, which suggests the need for the Government of India to maintain a different development strategy in Kashmir and also shows how Bakshi was able to leverage political instability in Kashmir to promote his economic agenda. To be sure, the Government of India did not make emergency allotments of rice to any other state. Indeed, as Benjamin Siegal notes, in the years following independence the Indian political leadership sought to transform India's eating habits. The new nation was seen as facing enduring scarcity, and as a result:

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177 G.N.S. Raghavan, "Kashmir on the March," Series of Articles Published in Indian Express October 1956, Issued by Department of Information, Jammu and Kashmir (New Delhi: Caxton Press, November 1956).

178 Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Aid from India," *Kashmir Today Series II,* Ministry of Information (Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir, 1955).

179 "Kashmir After August 9, 1953," Series of Articles Published in Amrit Bazar Patrika, Issued by Department of Information, Jammu and Kashmir (New Delhi, Caxton Press Private).

180 Chitrelekha Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity, and the Making of Kashmir (*New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) 102-113.

> Drawing upon wartime antecedent, global ideologies of population and land management, and an ethos of austerity imbued with the power to actualize economic self-reliance, the new state urged its citizens to give up rice and wheat, whose imports sapped the nation of the foreign currency needed for industrial development. In place of these staples, India's new citizens were asked to adopt 'substitute' and 'subsidiary' foods—including bananas, groundnuts, tapioca, yams, beets, and carrots—and give up a meal or more each week to conserve India's scant grain reserves.[181]

Unlike the discourse of "scarcity" in India, Bakshi's government utilized a narrative of "abundance" in Kashmir. Consumption of rice and wheat was encouraged through the provision of subsidies, and as we have seen, Bakshi defended the fact that Kashmir was heavily dependent on external aid. Since the new boundaries of postcolonial Indian citizenship relied upon values of "adversity, austerity, and sacrifice," it appeared that Kashmir was not to fit so easily into the model of postcolonial citizenship that the Government of India had envisioned.[182] In direct contrast to the Sheikh, Bakshi envisioned a political economy in which Kashmir would receive ongoing aid from the Government of India – as a result, his was a time of plenty. The provision of food subsidies and the narrative of "abundance"—in direct contrast to the rest of India—suggest the political compulsions of both the Government of India's and the state government's development policies in Kashmir. Perhaps, the provision of aid and abundance *under India* was intended to remake sentiments *towards India.* If Kashmiris could see for themselves the economic benefits of joining with India, they would be likely to consent to Indian rule. At the same time however, the importation of food and grains was in contravention to the Naya Kashmir manifesto, which stipulated that the state should be able to provide for the food needs of its citizens.

At the same time, it appears that the state government did make *some* effort to achieve self-sufficiency in food, which suggests that the importation of agricultural subsidies was seen as

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[181] Benjamin Siegal, "'Self-help which Ennobles a Nation': Development, Citizenship, and the Obligations of Eating in India's Austerity Years," *Modern Asian Studies*, 50, 3, (May 2016) 975-1018.
[182] Ibid.

a short-term political strategy to manage the unrest in the state after Sheikh Abdullah's arrest.[183] Bakshi was aware of the eventual need of the state to be able to feed its own people after the unrest died down. The government urged Kashmir's farmers to increase production in a number of ways.[184] It modernized the state's agricultural sector by investing in lift irrigation, application of fertilizers, and popularization of china paddy that was said to yield at least seventeen maunds more per acre than the local variety.[185] Irrigation alone was given nearly seventeen percent of the total plan allocation, and fifty-two irrigation schemes were established.[186] In just one year, 4000 acres of land were brought under cultivation.[187] By introducing irrigation to previously uncultivated lands, there was an increase in food production: "between 1951-52 and 1964-65, the food production in the state increased from 82.56 lakh to 166.10 lakh mounds and the annual growth rate of 8.8% registered…first three Five Year Plans was more than the all Indian average of 5.13% per annum for the same period."[188] Javeed ul Aziz places this increase in productivity not on the application of improved seeds and fertilizers, which were used marginally, but as a result of the intensification of irrigation. The importance given to irrigation suggests that despite its reliance on Indian food aid, Bakshi perhaps knew that the state could not be dependent on Indian subsidies for too long, as it was a temporary measure to address local concerns in a time of political instability. Thus, even as the Bakshi government increased it's economic dependence on India, keeping in mind the ideals of Naya Kashmir, it also began to cater for the *eventual* economic autonomy of the state, although the latter, as we will see, proved increasingly difficult to achieve.

[183] Chowdhary, Politics of Identity and Separatism, "To wean the support of people away from Sheikh Abdullah, the Centre and the state therefore adopted the policy of, to use the words of Habibullah, 'literally buying the Kashmiris back." Bakshi, therefore, started an era of subsidized economy of the state. (80-81)
[184] Ibid.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Javeed ul Aziz, "Economic History of Modern Kashmir," 131.
[187] Kalhan, "Report on Kashmir."
[188] Javeed ul Aziz, "Economic History of Modern Kashmir," 139.

Alongside the measures taken to improve food production, agriculture also met with a commercial boost. Commodities had to find new markets due to the blockade in the historical routes of Kashmir in the areas that were now controlled by Pakistan. Chief cash-crops like fruits (including apples) and saffron were developed. Because of their favorable cost-benefit ratio, a number of peasants switched over to cultivate cash-crops instead of subsistence ones like rice and wheat.[189] In addition, these crops were also not under the control of the state, as orchards were exempt from land reforms. Due to improvements in roads and transportations, these crops were able to reach indigenous markets as well as those in the northern Indian states. In the third five-year plan, a separate Department of Horticulture was established for the development of new orchards and the improvement of existing ones.

Policies of agricultural reform, including food subsidies and the abolition of *mujawaza*, played an important role in improving the lives of Kashmiris, especially in rural areas. The construction of irrigation canals in particular regions also proved politically rewarding. As Javeed ul Aziz suggests, "the vast economic benefits which the people obtained provided sound basis for transforming the affected areas into political constituencies for the leaders who were thought to be responsible for the work."[190]

Based on the recommendations from the various committees formed in the initial months of the government as well as the manifesto, which had called for improvements in transport, the state also embarked on a series of additional large-scale modernization projects. Alongside irrigation canals and dams, the state built a number of bridges, roads, and power development schemes. Bakshi had played an important role in improving the government transport department as Deputy Prime Minister; as Prime Minister he continued to improve city bus services,

[189] Javeed ul Aziz, "Economic History of Modern Kashmir," 159.
[190] Javeed ul Aziz, "Economic History of Modern Kashmir," 65.

connecting cities with various towns and remote villages.[191] Under the plan, the state developed 1,852 miles of new roads, which made trade and commerce more profitable.[192] Indeed, private sector transport went from 1,872 vehicles in 1947 to 6,325 under Bakshi. Developments in transportation created employment for nearly 10,000 people.[193]

Transportation was given the greatest fillip, however, with the completion of the Banihal Tunnel. After 1947, the only year-round road connection from the geographically isolated Kashmir Valley, which was surrounded by mountains, to the rest of the Indian subcontinent was in Pakistan. Prior to the tunnel, the Valley was only accessible by another two hundred mile road, which "twists and turns, runs along the sides of great mountains, and winds its way gradually to the nine thousand feet high Banihal Pass, where snow lingers in the shade even on the hottest days."[194] The road remained blocked due to heavy snowfall during the long winter months, leaving the Valley completely isolated during that time. While plans for the tunnel were discussed during the Sheikh's government, it was only constructed under Bakshi. The tunnel linked the Kashmir Valley with Jammu, and thus physically connected the Valley with the Indian mainland. Considered "the greatest single achievement of our times," the Banihal Tunnel, designed by two German engineers, was nearly 8,120 feet long, in the form of a single tube that could accommodate two-way traffic as well as two footpaths.[195] It allowed for a greater flow of trade between Kashmir and mainland India, in addition to increasing tourist traffic in the winter months. The opening of the tunnel was also critical to the commercialization of the fruit industry

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[191] O.N. Kak, "Khalid-I-Kashmir Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed Through My Eyes," Research and Publications Department, Acc No: 12033, Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, 102.
[192] "Bakshi Birthday Number," Lala Rookh: A Magazine of the Amar Singh College, 24, 1, 21 July, 1963 (Srinagar: Broca's Press, 1963).
[193] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Some Basic Statistics" (Jammu: Ranbir Government Press, 1964).
[194] H.P Mathrani, "The Conquest of Banihal" *Hindustan Standard,* Calcutta (2 Dec. 1956).
[195] Ibid.

in the state, as the main markets for these goods were now located in Northern India.[196] Now, goods and people could freely travel within and out of Kashmir. Aside from improving trade and transportation, the tunnel also played a critical emotional and psychological role in connecting Kashmiris with the rest of India. Both the state government and the Government of India aspired to year round communication, trade, and transport, in the hopes that it would cultivate a sense of emotional and physical integration with India.

Large-scale construction entailed the training of hundreds of engineers. The number of technically qualified individuals rose from fifty-seven in 1952 to 4,770 in 1963.[197] Significant funding was spent on electric power schemes, including the Sindh Valley Hydro Electric Scheme, a ten-mile long canal and powerhouse. Power generation increased ten fold from 4000 KWS in 1947 to 31000 KWS. Many villages became electrified. Anti-flood measures were also taken and a number of dams were constructed throughout the region.[198]

As Naya Kashmir focused on both agricultural and industrial development, Bakshi also placed an importance on the latter. New industries were established, which increased employment, while older ones received additional technological and monetary assistance. These included fisheries, animal husbandry, horticulture, sericulture, sheep breeding, forestry, and mineral development. The state also intervened in the development of handicrafts by training artisans in shawl making, embroidery, carpet weaving, woodcarving, paper mache and silverware. The government emporium was reorganized to facilitate a market for goods to be sold. The silk and woolen factories were modernized with new technology. New factories were established for watch assembly, steel, manufacturing barbed wires, radios, cycles, cement, bricks

[196] Javeed ul Aziz, "Economic History of Modern Kashmir," 46.
[197] Sofi G.A. Gash, "Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed: A Memorial Volume" (Srinagar: College Printing Press, 1982) 29.
[198] Kak, *Khalid-i-Kashmir*, 104.

and tiles, ceramics and concrete. A joinery and tanner was created.[199] The state held it's first Industrial Exhibition in 1955, and trade outside of Kashmir increased considerably. In the first year of his rule alone, Bakshi approved Rs. 1,500,000 in loans for craftsmen, artisans, and traders.[200] These developments were important because there was now a larger audience for Kashmiri goods. Because of financial integration and a growing market in India, the value of exports went from Rs. 150 lakhs to Rs. 1650 lakhs.[201]

How are we to understand the impact of these modernization schemes? Some scholars have focused on the "spectacle" of developmentalism, and how certain projects of the state, including grand housing, irrigation, or infrastructural schemes, were seen as spectacular displays of state power meant to awe or inspire the local population, and in turn underscore legitimacy for the state. Large-scale development projects were used to 'signal' modernization to the population at large. Much like the opening of irrigation dams in rural Sind in Pakistan that Daniel Haines examines, the large-scale modernization projects of Bakshi's government "underscored the ideas of development, modernity and progress," of Naya Kashmir, and signaled modernization to locals, demonstrating state power.[202] With their use of modern technology and machines, they ushered in a new era of progress. As some newspapers reported, the machines were of "curiosity in most parts of the Valley" and people came to see and marvel at the work that was being done. As one correspondent noted, "If nothing else, the tractors and the bull dozers have convinced the people that development work is really in progress. They stand and watch the roaring machines and the immobile faces of the Sikh *jawans* who drive them. They are transfixed and often go on

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[199] Kak, *Khalid-i-Kashmir,* 97.
[200] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Press Notes, December 24, 1953, Available at Government Press, Srinagar, Kashmir.
[201] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Some Basic Statistics."
[202] Daniel Haines, "'Concrete Progress": Irrigation, Development and Modernity in Mid-Twentieth Century Sind," in Taylor Sherman, William Gould, Sarah Ansari (eds) *From Subjects to Citizens: Society and the Everyday State in India and Pakistan, 1947-1970,* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014) 195.

staring fascinated for long spells as if admiring a great rushing water."[203] In the development of bunds and other projects, the government gave low wages to people, including women and girls "who would carry baskets to carry earth to bunds while the men dug."[204] In the quest for modernization, all Kashmiris—men, women, and children—were to take part and benefit.

At the same time, however, Bakshi's projects were not simply a "spectacle." This point gains further clarification when we compare projects such as the Banihal Tunnel in Kashmir with projects such as the Korangi Township in Pakistan. Korangi was a satellite town for several hundred thousand residents southeast of Karachi that was constructed during the military rule of Ayub Khan. The township, which received funding from USAID and the Ford Foundation, was heralded in international media as the largest slum clearance and urban rehabilitation program in Asia. Yet, there were deep flaws from the very initiation of the project; it lagged in basic amenities, which resulted in it being disregarded and deemed a failure.

Marcus Daechsel takes the enactment of development and modernity in the case of the Korangi in a different direction, and ties it to Foucauldian notions of sovereignty and governmentality.[205] Daeschel argues that Korangi was not actually a failure, despite not coming to fruition in the way that was expected. This is because the government's intentions behind Korangi were different. He proposes that Ayub Khan's government was "only interested in demonstrating its ability to make decisions and to deploy executive power over its territory [sovereignty]." Although Korangi was:

> Designed to be a long-term development project in line with large scale urban reconstruction efforts carried out by many governments after the second World War…[it was] never more than of short term importance to major players involved in its

[203] Kalhan, "Report on Kashmir," 9.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Marcus Daeschel, "Sovereignty, Governmentality, and Development in Ayub's Pakistan: The Case of Korangi Township," in Taylor Sherman, William Gould, Sarah Ansari (eds) *From Subjects to Citizens: Society and the Everyday State in India and Pakistan, 1947-1970* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014) 146.

> creation…[and was] conceived when both the new military government in Pakistan and its sponsors in Washington felt under immense pressure to demonstrate their ability to act whilst otherwise occupying weak positions on the ground.[206]

The "spectacle" of Korangi was geared towards international observers, in an effort to justify Pakistan's close alliance with the United States during the Cold War, as well as its ability to enact development schemes. The government was not actually interested in its practical implementation or success on the ground; in the end, Daeschel argues that the post-colonial Pakistani state deliberately enacted development failure.

The Korangi Township and the Banihal Tunnel were both deemed momentous feats of their time and received significant international attention. They were also critical to the legitimization of both Ayub Khan's and Bakshi's government. Yet, to what extent does Daeschel's argument regarding the purpose of the Korangi Township relate to projects such as the Banihal Tunnel in Kashmir? In contrast to the premeditated failures of Korangi, I contend that a project like the Banihal Tunnel *had to succeed,* and it did. It was needed in order to remake the physical, emotional and psychological ties between India and Kashmir. And so, while the Bakshi government was certainly interested in its propaganda value, as I discuss in the next section, the postcolonial state's imperatives in Kashmir were different from that of Pakistan. Since Kashmir was a disputed territory, the Kashmiri state was less interested in the territorialization of its sovereign power—to show to an international audience that it had executive power over its territory—which is what Daeshchel argues in the case of Korangi. Indeed, we could argue, Banihal enabled the Kashmiri state to relinquish notions of sovereignty or territorialization, given that it now became intrinsically economically and politically linked to India. However, the state was interested in the governmentality of its populace and remaking the

[206] Daechsel, "Sovereignty, Governmentality and Development," 154.

public in relation to its modernizing schemes under Naya Kashmir.

To what extent was the Kashmiri state successful in its modernization plan? In the last section, I will discuss the limitations of Bakshi's economic policies. It is, however, important to note that in the 1950s, a number of development indices increased. Per capita income was raised from Rs. 188.41 to Rs. 236.86. In the first two five year plans, the state created 33, 569 jobs. Furthermore, the revenues of the government rose from Rs. 523 lakhs in 1953-1954 to Rs. 2,453.46 lakhs at the end of Bakshi's government.[207]

In the decade of Bakshi's government, development euphoria had taken over the state administration and was making its inroads into Kashmiri society. Roads, transport, industries, power plants, and improved agriculture and irrigation techniques all signaled modernization to the Kashmir masses. Most importantly, a growing Kashmiri Muslim middle class emerged, buttressed by shifts in land reform, employment, and economic opportunities. This class had increasing economic and financial ties with the Government of India. While these developments were linked to the state's economic ideals under Naya Kashmir, they were also part in parcel of the state's political compulsions.

Kashmir Chalo: Propaganda, Tourism and Indian Cinema

In the previous section, we have seen the challenges Bakshi's government faced in implementing the economic plan under Naya Kashmir given Kashmir's disputed political status. Primarily, Bakshi's overreliance on aid—both monetarily and through the use of agricultural subsidies—from the Government of India undermined Naya Kashmir's goals of self-sufficiency. At the same time, the government implemented a series of policies—including the abolition of *mujawaza* and improvements in lift irrigation, agriculture, trade, commerce, transport, and the development of industries that sought to raise the standard of living for its citizens and usher in

[207] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Some Basic Statistics".

an era of socialist modernization. In addition to being a set of practices, Naya Kashmir also played a role on a discursive level. In this section, I highlight the role that the publicity of various development schemes played in not just signaling modernization and progress to a local populace, but also serving as propaganda for vested Indian and international observers. As "spectacles", they were oriented to the international gaze in an era of Cold War politics. State-led propaganda utilized Naya Kashmir to project narratives of development and economic progress in order to portray political normalcy in Kashmir to the outside world. In sum, Naya Kashmir gained a currency that went beyond the borders of the state.

In the 1950s, the Jammu and Kashmir Department of Information, the department responsible for state propaganda and publicity, issued a series of advertisements in local, Indian, and even international press. The advertisements were of two varieties—the first, listed the state's achievements in building a Naya Kashmir, including progress updates on education, agriculture, healthcare, and industry. The second highlighted Kashmir's tourism opportunities, encouraging readers to travel and see for themselves the progress that was being made in the state. The entire state administration was mobilized to take part in propaganda efforts, and various ministries were encouraged to send regular updates to the Department.

Within Kashmir, the Department of Information utilized Radio Kashmir to host a series of programs reiterating the state's defense for arresting the Sheikh and publicizing its new policies. Undoubtedly, a similar counter-propaganda department had been set up under the Sheikh, to counter Pakistan propaganda in Kashmir. Under Bakshi, however, in addition to highlighting Kashmir's integral links to India, the department issued a series of programs in which cabinet members and leading administrators discussed development schemes that the new government was seeking to implement. Information centers were also set up throughout the state.

These centers were tasked with publicizing the five-year plans and other activities of the various departments through poetry sessions, dramas, skits, debates, symposia, films, and audio-visual means. They also provided the public with access to state and government publications.[208]

Anti-Pakistan propaganda reached new levels. The Department of Information kept a close eye on Pakistani-based newspapers, often reprinting and distributing any editorials or opinion pieces that were critical of conditions in Pakistan. The department especially highlighted the poor development conditions on the other side of the cease-fire line, in Pakistan-administered Kashmir. In one such publication, the information officer described:

> A veritable iron curtain has been thrown round the area and no outsiders—not even Pakistanis—save those permitted by the Pakistan government are allowed to enter the territory…Local population kept down with a firm hand and even elementary civic rights are denied to it….There is no legislature and people have no say in the administration….Governments have been changed ten times during the last nine years or so….The Azad Kashmir government cannot even appoint a peon….[There is an] imposition on martial law, ban on public meeting and banishment and detention of political workers….[The] number of people jailed [is] 4,632.[209]

The inability to hire even a peon was in clear contrast to Bakshi's casual appointments, and the employment opportunities that were being made in Indian-administered Kashmir. Indeed, the difference in development between the two regions was an often-repeated point by the Indian state. Krishna Menon, India's representative to the United Nations remarked, "Why is it that the five year plan is making vast strides in the state which the Jammu and Kashmir government administers, yet there is no such thing at all or even a semblance of it anywhere in those [Pakistan-administered] areas?"[210] The report went on to describe the poor development situation in Pakistan-administered Kashmir, declaring that the price of rice sold at 100 rupees per standard

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[208] "Setting up Information Centers at Various Places in JK State," File No: 324/1961, Accessed From: Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[209] "Inside Pakistan-Held Kashmir," Issued by the Information Officer, Kashmir Bureau of Information, (New Delhi: Eastern Printing Press) 2.
[210] "Inside Pakistan-held Kashmir," 4.

unity of measure (as opposed to eight on the Indian side).[211] Geared towards international observers, comparisons between economic developments in both regions were intended to highlight the economic benefits of merger with India.

Under the Department of Information, the government also fostered close ties with local, Indian and international media, in an effort to bring them into line with the state's narrative on socio-political developments. Any adverse, anti-Bakshi comments that were made in Indian or international press were directly dealt with. In one example, the Srinagar correspondent for the *London Times*, S.P. Sahni, was contacted for writing a story on the gaining influence of the Political Conference (an opposition group). After taking the matter up with Sahni, the Department of Information official noted, "Mr. Sahni agreed in the future he would avoid giving publicity to [the Political Conference] and serve as their propaganda."[212] These papers were provided with state-prepared material to report on Kashmir's progress. Papers such as *Blitz, Indian Express, Daily Pratap, Times of India, Hindustan Times* and *Hindustan Standard* reported on economic developments in the state utilizing this propaganda.[213] Issues of government publications such as *Kashmir Today* (in English), *Yojna* (in Hindi) and *Tameer* (in Urdu), which primarily covered stories pertaining to development, were distributed to various Indian states, international embassies, and media institutions.

International and Indian media personnel who wanted to report on the state had to obtain permission to enter. Most of them requested to meet with Bakshi and his cabinet, and observe schools, small industrial enterprises, agriculture, and community projects.[214] The Department of

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[211] "Inside Pakistan-held Kashmir," 14.
[212] "Mr. Sahni, Srinagar Correspondent for *London Times,*" Correspondence between RC Raina and J.N. Zutshi, Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.
[213] "Advertisement File," File 72/1955, Accessed From: Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.
[214] "Permission Sought by the Local and Foreign Correspondents," File 155/1954-1955, Accessed From: Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.

Information provided them with housing and additional facilities, including transportation. For this purpose, a special fund called the "Entertainment of Press Correspondents" was utilized.[215] The funds were so in demand that in 1957, as early as the month of June, the department was concerned that the funds for the year under this portfolio had "almost [been] exhausted."[216] These visits would result in entire issues of a given newspaper or magazine that would feature Bakshi's Kashmir, focusing on the educational and economic uplift of the people, development projects, five-year plans, and tourism.[217] Bakshi and members of his cabinet also contributed pieces to these issues.

The journalistic accounts in the introduction are a reflection of the state's efforts to influence the media. The practice began under the Sheikh but was widely implemented under Bakshi. Journalists who visited the state were to be "shown such things as will enable them to appreciate…that things are perfectly normal, that the National Conference has a tremendous hold on the people and that the government is a thoroughly popular one."[218] If given adequate facilities, it was noted that one visiting journalist was "likely to present our point of view in a favorable light."[219]

Bakshi paid special attention to the tourist industry, seeing that it could serve as not only a major source of revenue for the state, but also project normalcy to Indians, as well as others. Under Sheikh Abdullah's Emergency government, any non-Kashmiris that travelled to Kashmir had to obtain a special permit. The Sheikh had insisted on the permit not only for security reasons, but also to consolidate Kashmir's autonomous status. Bakshi removed the permit

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[215] Ibid.
[216] Ibid.
[217] Ibid.
[218] "Visit of Press Correspondents to the State," File 215/1948, Accessed From: Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.
[219] Ibid.

system, making it easier for Indians to travel to Kashmir, and utilizing another means to create greater integration. A tourist reception center was opened in Srinagar, money was given to improve the conditions of houseboats, and the number of hotels, youth hostels and restaurants increased. The state built a number of bungalows in major tourist areas. Access to Kashmir was made easier by the establishment of a series of deluxe busses that would bring in tourists from Pathancoat to Srinagar.[220] Agencies were opened in a number of major Indian cities in order to attract middle class urban Indians to come to Kashmir.[221]

In order to increase tourist traffic, a series of tourist brochures and travel guides were printed and distributed to organizations, schools, universities, and media throughout India and elsewhere. These guides first began by situating the history of Kashmir; it's accession to India, and developments that had occurred in the state since 1947. They then described the topography and beautiful landscapes of the region, the places of interest, diversity amongst the local population, as well as their cultural habits, including customs, holidays, food, and dress. Attention was given to agricultural developments as well as the various industries—including handicrafts and woodcarving. [222] Subsequent guides included images of Kashmir and Kashmiris. Unlike previous colonial guides which had focused on landscapes and were interspersed with images of the poor Kashmiri peasant, or an elderly woman dressed in *pheran* or a traditional Kashmiri dress, in these new guides there were images of children attending classes, men working at construction sites, women in crisp white *kameez shalvar* attending colleges, and doctors and patients interacting at health centers. For the middle class Indian, Kashmir was a place they could identity with and lay claim to, as the guides were positive about Kashmir's

[220] Kak, *Khalid-i-Kashmir,* 131.
[221] "Bakshi Birthday Number," Lala Rookh.
[222] The Publications Division, "Kashmir," Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, (Bombay: New Jack Printing Works Private LTD, November 1956).

accession to India, a place that was now bustling with economic activity, and not one that was disputed.

These guides intended to project a "modern" Kashmir, and highlight Kashmir's rapid modernization. Kashmir was no more the previously underdeveloped, backwards society; it was on par with other modernizing states, and thus, was a critical constituent of the broader Nehruvian socialist political order. Advertisements emphasized the "modern" hotels, with their nightclubs, cocktail bars, continental cuisines, ballrooms, cinemas and telephones.[223] An image below of women in their swimsuits amidst the scenic landscape was intended to show the "openness" in the region. The focus on economic issues in these guides was surprisingly thorough. Lists of businesses were given, and low prices of everyday commodities were highlighted. Tourism, which depended heavily upon developmentalist discourse, was intended to construct normalcy and project a particular image of Kashmir for the Indian popular imagination. It was also instrumental in associating norms of modernity with Kashmir.

Emphasis on developing the tourist industry began to have its desired effect. A correspondent for the *Times of India* wrote, "the steeply rising figures of visiting tourists are a reliable index of the sense of security and political stability now obtaining in the state, which is humming with constructive nation building activity, providing increasing employment to the people and building up better and higher standards of living for them." In 1951, 9,330 tourists from India, and 1,250 foreign tourists visited Kashmir. By 1960, the number jumped to 63,370 and 11,190 respectively.[224]

The development of the tourist industry was not the only means through which the state projected normalcy; nearing the end of his rule, Bakshi also oversaw the rise in films that were

[223] GR Sarup, *Travel Guide to Kashmir* (New Delhi: Asia Press, 1955).
[224] Mirza Nazir Ahmad, *Management of Tourism in Jammu and Kashmir* (New Delhi: Dilpreet Publishing House, 2010) 45

made in Kashmir. While Bakshi himself certainly did not plan for what Ananya Jahanara Kabir describes as India's "Kashmir obsession," his government's propaganda objectives converged all too well with the fervor for Kashmir in Indian cinema. For what, if not "excitement, modernity, youthfulness, and escape", as Kabir mentions, could have better described the image Bakshi wanted to project of Kashmir?[225]

Indian directors sent their scripts to the Department of Information, requesting permission to shoot their films in Kashmir. They assured the Kashmiri authorities that the films would have no religious or political propaganda. If a film was approved, a government order would be issued in its favor. The Department of Information requested that the completed films be sent to the defense authorities to obtain their approval before they were screened. Films such as *Junglee, Kashmir ki Kali* and *Phir Wohi Dil Laya Hoon* played a critical role in bringing tourism to Kashmir, in addition to consolidating the desire for Kashmir in the Indian imagination. As Kabir argues, it was not just the long-admired beauty of Kashmir that was on display, but also the Valley as the postcolonial, modern playground for Indian metropolitan youth.[226] The supposed tranquility of the 1960s Indian films belied the very real political maneuverings that were occurring contemporaneously.[227] While Kabir attends to the ways in which Indian cinema enabled Kashmir to become "a pastoral space where the idea of a new Indian could materialize, and a new kind of youthful identity," as well as how "narrative and symptomatic repetition" revealed the anxieties surrounding the broader political climate at the time, she does not examine how Kashmiris themselves responded to these films.[228] While it is difficult to ascertain how

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[225] Ananya Jaharana Kabir, *Territory of Desire: Representing the Valley of Kashmir (*Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009) 38.
[226] Kabir, *Territory of Desire,* 14.
[227] Kabir, *Territory of Desire*, 44.
[228] To be sure, Kabir does situate a number of Kashmiri responses to Indian depictions of fantasy and desire, but these responses emerge a few decades later, when the political context called for a different mode of visual and literary activity. See Kabir, *Territory of Desire,* 39.

Kashmiris viewed these cinematic depictions of the Valley, we do know that at this time a number of cinema houses existed in Kashmir, and Kashmiris, especially those living in urban areas, regularly attended the cinema. It is perhaps not implausible that the cinematic obsession with Kashmir, including frequent visits by high-profile stars such as Dilip Kumar, Shammi Kapoor, Saira Bano, and Sharmila Tagore, materialized for them the sense of "progress" and modernity that Bakshi wanted to foster.

Why was Bakshi interested in targeting Indians themselves for his propaganda efforts? As a disputed territory, the reshaping of sentiments had to be cultivated on both sides—both Kashmiri sentiment towards India, as well as Indian sentiment towards Kashmir. Given that there was a strong anti-Bakshi lobby in India by those who were opposed to the Sheikh's arrest, it is possible that there were reports of the level of political suppression and corruption in the state that had made their way into the country. It is also probable that there was some opposition to the amount of aid Kashmir was receiving, both within the Indian leadership as well as the broader public. Thus, in order to further justify the need for Indian aid in Kashmir, I suggest that Bakshi had to create the atmosphere conducive to that aid and Indian investment. Both the tourist industry as well as Indian cinema shaped the sentiment of the Indian public towards Kashmir and fostered the grounds that would create greater investment in Kashmir. By projecting Kashmir as a "modern playground," Indians would be able to see that their country's investment in Kashmir was materializing.

It was not just journalists and press officials that visited Kashmir and shaped the broader publics' understanding of developments in the region. A number of international leaders also came to Kashmir, some upon the insistence of Bakshi. The most high profile visit occurred in 1955, when a Soviet delegation, consisting of Nikolai Bulganin, the Soviet Premier, and Nikita

Khrushchev, who at the time was the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, arrived in Srinagar on a two day visit. Soviet perspectives on the Kashmiri issue were ever evolving based on the politics of the Cold War. At the time of Partition, Soviet perspectives on the Kashmir issue were non-committal. Dr. Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra details in his book on the India-Russia partnership that the Soviet representative remained absent during voting when the Kashmir question came up at the United Nations in 1948, believing both India and Pakistan to be part of the Anglo-American bloc.[229] Indeed, one of the primary reasons the US voted in favor of the first UN resolution calling for a plebiscite was because it sought to bring Pakistan within its sphere of influence, seeing it as an important ally in resisting communist encroachment. Because of India's concerted efforts to remain neutral, the US remained aloof from India. With US-Pakistan ties increasing with the signing of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization and the Baghdad Pact, the USSR looked towards India, which had taken a leading role in the non-aligned movement.[230] Ties between the two countries were further strengthened during a Soviet visit to India in December of 1955, which included a stop in Srinagar.

In Srinagar, the Soviet delegation received a grand state welcome, and addressed large crowds that were gathered. Bakshi and the other members of his administration took the Soviet delegation around Kashmir, and especially to places of development and tourist interest, highlighting the steps towards economic development the state had taken in recent years with the help of the Government of India. At a reception hosted by Bakshi in Srinagar, Khrushchev denounced the two-nation theory, and declared that Kashmir was India's internal affair. He

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[229] "Partition to Tashkent," from Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra's, "Russia And The Kashmir Issue Since 1991: Perception, Attitude and Policy," Ph.d., diss, (International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2004), Available from: http://www.kashmirlife.net/partition-to-tashkent-127104/.

[230] For more on the role of the Soviet Union as well as the effects of the US-Pakistan military alliance, see Bashir Ahmed, "The Politics of the Major Powers Toward the Kashmir Dispute: 1947-1965." Ph.d., diss., (Political Science, University of Nebraska, 1972) 145-168 and 201-247. On the role of the United States, see Patricia Colway Sympson, "The Kashmir Dispute in World Politics," Ph.D. diss., (Political Science, St. John's University, 1968).

declared, "Kashmir is one of the state of the Republic of India that has been decided by the people of Kashmir."[231] He criticized Pakistani politics, stating that the Pakistani ruling circle was not interested in its people or state, but in the politics of the United States.[232] The Soviet delegation's visit to India, and stopover in Kashmir, served as a critical turning point in support of India's case on Kashmir. After being shown Bakshi's Naya Kashmir, the Soviet Union squarely situated itself in the Indian camp and vetoed a series of UN resolutions demanding demilitarization and the holding of a plebiscite, which led to a further delay of a political resolution on Kashmir. Indeed, Soviet support of India's case was critical in maintaining the status quo, and eroding the calls for a plebiscite on the international front.[233]

Kashmir played a crucial role in shaping India's foreign policy towards Muslim-majority countries as well as its handling of religious affairs within India. As Taylor Sherman has highlighted in the case of Hyderabad, the Indian state was keen to secure India's reputation as a secular state both home and abroad.[234] This meant it had to substantiate its reputation as a secular state with its treatment of Muslims in India. In one instance, when the Hyderabadi interim government was interested in deporting a number of Afghans that were settled in Hyderabad for generations, the Afghan Ministry of External Affairs declared that the Afghans might fall pray to Pakistani propaganda on Kashmir if they were forced to leave Hyderabad, and give fodder to the Pakistanis regarding India's poor treatment of Muslims, which would then bolster Pakistan's claims on Kashmir.[235] Because of the sensitivities surrounding Kashmir, these Afghan families

[231] "From Partition to Tashkent."
[232] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Soviet Leaders in Kashmir," (Srinagar: Lalla Rookh Publications, 1955).
[233] Soviet-Pakistan relations shifted in the second half of the 1960's, as a shift in Soviet leadership envisioned good relations with both India and Pakistan would deter American and Chinese influence in the region.
[234] Taylor Sherman, *Muslim Belonging in Secular India: Negotiating Citizenship in Postcolonial Hyderabad* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
[235] Taylor Sherman, "Migration, Citizenship, and Belonging in Hyderabad 1946-1956," in Taylor Sherman, William Gould, Sarah Ansari (ed) *From Subjects to Citizens: Society and the Everyday State in India and Pakistan, 1947-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014) 108.

were permitted to stay in Hyderabad, in order to showcase India's positive treatment of Muslim communities.

Amongst Muslim-majority countries, the issue of Kashmir was also complicated for countries that were concerned with maintaining relations with both India and Pakistan, and officially, had taken a position of neutrality. However, prominent leaders and religious figures within these societies were partial to Pakistan's position and demands for international Muslim solidarity. Egypt was one such case. On the one hand, Egypt had close ties with India, especially given their common struggle against British imperialism and Egypt's recognition of the need for Indian support in Arab causes such as Palestine. On the other, Egypt wanted to be seen as the leader of the Islamic world, and thus could not denounce Pakistan's position.[236] In addition, a number of influential groups within Egypt, including religious figures at Al Azhar and leading newspapers were sympathetic to the cause of Kashmiri self-determination. The issue came to a diplomatic crisis in 1950-1951, when Egyptian diplomats and religious leaders ostensibly departed from the official state line, and began to speak out against the Government of India. A group that called itself the "Friends of Kashmir," also began to issue statements, leading the Indian embassy in Egypt to reprimand the Egyptian authorities.[237] While the diplomatic row was eventually resolved, there were concerns that the Kashmir issue would be made into an "Islamic one," and the Government of India would lose its standing in the international arena if that were the case.

And so, it is no surprise that Bakshi viewed developing ties with the broader Muslim world as strategically important. He invited a number of political and diplomatic leaders and media delegations from Muslim-majority countries to visit Kashmir. The Government of India

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[236]Zaki Awad El Sayed Mekkawi, "Egypt and India, a Study of Political and Cultural Relations, 1947-1964," PhD. Diss., (International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2008).
[237] Ibid, 59-70.

facilitated these visits. Developmentalism and the promotion of Naya Kashmir served as the cornerstone of these visits. Press delegations from Egypt and Syria visited Kashmir in 1955.[238] In November 1955, the Indonesian Vice President, Dr. Mohammad Hatta, visited Kashmir, hailing the economic ties between India and Indonesia.[239] The King of Saudi Arabia, on his visit to India, also visited Kashmir that year.[240] The Iranian ambassador to India, A.A. Hekmat, gave the key address at the sixth convocation of the University of Jammu and Kashmir. In his speech, he urged the government to continue on its path, and develop the study of agriculture, sericulture, horticulture, industries and crafts.[241] All of these delegations were given the opportunity to meet with Bakshi and other leaders, and observe the progress in the state. Their itineraries were filled with meetings with Bakshi and members of his cabinet, as well as tours to major tourist attractions, including the Mughal Gardens and the Dal Lake, as well as schools and major development schemes. Upon their return to their respective countries, the media accounts and reports that were written were resoundingly pro-Bakshi, and thus, pro-India.

In the case of Egypt, the shifts in discourses surrounding Kashmir in the media had an impact. The Egyptian government increasingly saw India as an ally against Western imperialist designs in Kashmir, and began to restrict Pakistan from using Arab and Islamic forums against India.[242] Consequently, Egypt would abstain from voting on a UN resolution on Kashmir that was sponsored by Pakistan in 1957.

By inviting representatives from a number of Muslim-majority countries to see the

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[238] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Press Notes July 20, 1955, Available at Government Press, Srinagar, Kashmir.
[239] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Press Notes November 1, 1955, Available at Government Press, Srinagar, Kashmir.
[240] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Press Notes November 19, 1955, Available at Government Press, Srinagar, Kashmir.
[241] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Press Notes, October 1, 1955, Available at Government Press, Srinagar, Kashmir.
[242] Mekkawi, "Egypt and India," 80.

progress that was being made in Kashmir, Bakshi was able to isolate Pakistan's calls for international Muslim solidarity on the issue of Kashmir. On their return to their respective countries, the leaders and journalists made statements about the status of Kashmir, highlighting how, under Bakshi, Kashmir was benefiting economically from its relationship to India.[243] The state relied upon developmentalism to project its legitimacy to a broader international audience, and Bakshi was able to posit himself amongst an international coterie of postcolonial Muslim leadership—as a secularizing, modernizing Muslim leader.

As this section has shown, Naya Kashmir went beyond a set of practices to promote economic change on the ground; it was also used as a short-term propaganda strategy to portray normalcy and progress in a time of political uncertainty to those outside the state. What is most crucial to this deployment of Naya Kashmir is the agentive role of Bakshi and the state government—and not the Government of India—in developing and propogating these policies, whether it was by inviting international delegations to Kashmir or promoting tourism and Indian cinema in the state. The state government was attending to its *own* internal and external compulsions, and was at the forefront of putting forth this vision of Kashmir, even to the point of ensuring that people in India were made aware of the "progress" in the state. By deploying Naya Kashmir, the state government, and Bakshi, was trying to consolidate its own authority, on its own terms.

Corruption and the Fraught Realities of Progress

In the previous sections, we have seen the compulsions that animated particular development policies of Bakshi's government, and how they were intended to address local, Indian, and international concerns in a time of great political instability. What were the long-term

[243] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Press Notes, February 13, 1955, Available at Government Press, Srinagar, Kashmir.

implications of these economic development policies? If Bakshi's decade was one of development, it was equally one of corruption. A series of high-profile corruption cases, including one that eventually led to Bakshi's political demise, littered the pages of bureaucratic correspondence, press notes, and newspapers, as well as memoirs and literary accounts. In a stark departure from the propaganda that was circulated both locally and internationally, in these accounts, we see how Naya Kashmir was undermined as a result of the state's economic policies. We are also able to get a glimpse into the everyday workings of Bakshi's government, as well as its impact on the broader society. Using narratives of corruption, this section highlights how political compulsions, in favoring short-term strategic policies, impeded long-term economic progress on the ground.

In the early 1960s, *Kashmir Affairs*, a journal based out of Delhi, and edited by Balraj Puri, a journalist from Jammu, brought out an issue dedicated entirely to Kashmir's economic affairs. The issue made "startling revelations" about Kashmir's economy, which "despite highest per capita revenue, highest per capita central aid, highest per capita plan, and lowest per capita taxes among the states of India, is lagging behind the rest of the country in its economic growth and productivity."[244] Articles in the journal highlighted how the state was not solely concerned with the aim of speedy economic growth, because indeed, a number of its economic policies were "*politically motivated"* (emphasis mine). Kashmir's tax revenue was only thirty-one percent of the state's entire revenue, while the average for other states was nearly sixty-six percent. Thus, a vast majority of the state's revenue came from central aid causing "an overdependence on union grants."[245] Because of the abundance of central aid, the authors noted that per capita revenue was far ahead of all other states; for example, the per capita revenue of

[244] *Kashmir Affairs*, Jan-Feb, 3, 9, (Delhi: Edited, printed and published by Balraj Puri).
[245] Ibid, 29.

Punjab, which was the second highest state, was Rs.31.41, whereas Kashmir's was Rs.48.[246] In regards to the state's budget, the journal noted that a far greater percentage was spent on the departments of Information, Police and Intelligence in comparison to other states in the Indian Union, suggesting that because of the government's "political motivations," greater effort had to be placed in securing the political benefits of particular development policies over policies that could result in greater long-term economic benefits.

As mentioned earlier, the government invested in improving agriculture and industry. The journal challenged the notion that these were improvements, stating that agriculture had not improved; while there were new fertilizers and land reforms, the state still had the worst per capital agricultural output and no food self-sufficiency, despite years of planning.[247] Industries fared no better; the journal reported that their working expenses exceeded the income they earned, and thus, were a drain on the system.

The journal also bemoaned the nepotism and corruption under Bakshi. It suggested that the transport industry had "thrown up the largest number of millionaires."[248] This was because Bakshi centralized the authority to issue permits for the operation of vehicles on various routes; as a result, he "more often than not used it to reward political services….Every transporter [was] a member of the ruling party…if [he] doesn't meet objectives, [his] permit liable to be cancelled."[249] To be sure, it was not just transport permits that were centralized in the authority of the Prime Minister; Bakshi was also responsible for the issuing of loans, scholarships, and important contracts. The journal declared that the Kashmiri state was the most cooperativized state in India, with nearly fifty percent of families belonging to the cooperative movement, which

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[246] Ibid, 8.
[247] Ibid, 14.
[248] Ibid, 12.
[249] Ibid, 12.

provided them with rural credit. These cooperatives were run by National Conference committees, and thus, were highly politicized. It was noted that:

> the distance of the route to riches in the state is often inversely proportion to the humiliations and degenerations a person can suffer. The way a permit or loan is granted puts a burden on the conscience of every recipient. Likewise, a majority of the fifty per cent of the families in the valley who have been covered by a highly bureaucratized and politicized cooperative movement carry a sense of guilt due to the way they are patronized.[250]

The journal also questioned the work of the development sector, given that many officials and engineers affiliated with the Public and Works Department (PWD) utilized lower quality material in order to appropriate a portion of the funds allotted for a given project. In a few cases, officials had "damage[d] roads…[and] appropriate[d] a portion of the money spent on repair."[251] Senior officers who were in charge of planning and executing the Sindh Valley Hydro Electric Scheme were all placed under suspension for siphoning funds.[252] While the manifesto had called for the protection of Kashmir's forests, deforestation and illegal timber smuggling reached an all-time high.

Accounts of local corruption were also discussed in local newspapers, including *The Kashmir Post, Martand, Apna Sansar, Khidmat,* and *Sach*. These papers repeatedly highlighted stories of corrupt government workers, hiring of unqualified candidates, illegal promotions, bribes, and money that was intended for development schemes going into the pockets of ministers, inspectors, contractors, engineers, and directors. In February of 1954, The *Martand* complained that loans intended for artisans and petty traders were "being given to business men who may be able to get loans as a result of their influence both in government circles and

[250] Ibid, 7.
[251] Ibid, 11.
[252] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Press Notes, September 6, 1954, Available at Government Press, Srinagar, Kashmir.

National Conference…[they are] depriving deserving people of aid.[253] In another issue, the same paper criticized the government for making promotions, appointments, and transfers based on influence instead of merit, seniority, and experience. It also accused the local municipality of not doing its part to ensure the cleanliness of neighborhoods and taking stronger action against those who were selling adulterated milk.[254]

Perhaps the most criticism was reserved for the officers in the bureaucracy who were enjoying the privileges of working under Bakshi. The *Khidmat*, an otherwise pro-government paper, declared the need to review the private property of all government officers, and ascertain whether they were getting money from other means.[255] Others bemoaned that children of government officials and other influential people were being selected for loans, trainings, and educational scholarships to study abroad, whereas those who had no political influence were being left behind.[256] In his memoirs, Advocate Hirday Nath Dhar lamented the corruption amongst the government officers, who had private servants in their homes, and spent state funds on furniture, personal travel and petrol.[257]

These accounts stand in stark contrast to the reports of progress that the state was circulating. They suggest that money was not being spent in income-generating projects, but rather, on bribing an entire class of government officials. William Gould, in his study of corruption amongst bureaucrats in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh highlights how corruption in the postcolonial period served multiple purposes and enabled local politicians and parties to stake out networks of power and alliances in electoral politics, through the use of control over

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253 "Martand, 2-3-1954," Local Press News Round Up, Government Press, Srinagar.
254 "Martand, 2-14-1954," Local Press News Round Up, Government Press, Srinagar.
255 "Khidmat, 22-6-1954," Local Press News Round Up, Government Press, Srinagar.
256 "Sach 16-7-1954," Local Press News Round Up, Government Press, Srinagar.
257 Hirdey Nath Dhar, *Memoirs at the Bar* (Jammu: Sher-i-State Printers, 1968) 39.

licenses, permits, rationing and patronage.[258] If we are to apply this to the case of Kashmir, these set of practices under Bakshi also became a way for the government to create legitimacy for the disputed state and engender new forms of political loyalty.[259] In this context, patronage, which was interpreted as corruption was not only tolerated, but also was deployed as a political strategy, to the level of becoming a "policy," and pervaded both the high levels of government and the everyday local bureaucrats in the civil service, police, etc. State patronage relied upon the same narratives of "abundance" that underwrote the food subsidization programs. For example, Bakshi was reputed to have said that if a Kashmiri was unable to get rich under his rule, he would never be able to get rich.[260] Here again, we see how the need to obtain political loyalty caused the state to favor short-term strategic interests over long-term economic growth.

Allegations of corruption were so frequent that eventually the state was forced to respond. In 1955, the state established an anti-corruption tribunal under the chairmanship of Justice M.A. Shahmiri.[261] Its activities, however, were suspended and in 1956, the situation became so dire that it caused a split within the Bakshi cabinet, and a breakaway faction, led by G.M. Sadiq, was formed. This faction was called the Democratic National Conference (DNC). In Sadiq's published correspondence with Bakshi from that period, he asserted that the pre-1953 situation that had gripped the Sheikh's administration was sustained under Bakshi; National Conference workers were authoritarian, and the state's efficiency was being "sapped by corruption and malpractice."[262] Bakshi admitted that corruption had not yet been eliminated, but

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[258] William Gould, *Bureaucracy, Community and Influence in India: Society and the State, 1930s-1960s* (London: Routledge, 2011) 173.

[259] Gould, *Bureaucracy, Community and Influence,* 1.

[260] Interview with Author, Mir Nazir Ahmed, Srinagar, Dec. 15, 2013; Nandita Haksar, *The Many Faces of Kashmiri Nationalism* (New Delhi: Speaking Tiger Books, 2015) 37.

[261] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Press Notes, January 1, 1955, Available at Government Press, Srinagar, Kashmir.

[262] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Bakshi-Sadiq Correspondence, June-July 1957" (Srinagar: Lalla Rookh Publications, 1957).

that the administration was "working fine" and indeed had improved. He added that a series of commissions were appointed to look into corruption charges, and that Sadiq should refrain from discrediting the National Conference, as that would help the opposition.[263] Within less than a year, members of the DNC would once again be absorbed into Bakshi's cabinet; however, the correspondence between the two leaders sheds light into the gravity of the state of corruption. Sadiq would come to power in 1964 and lead the corruption charges against Bakshi and his close associates.

Conclusion

In 1965, a few years after Bakshi stepped down from power, the state of Jammu and Kashmir, which was now under the Chief Ministership of G.M. Sadiq brought a corruption case against him and his associates. The Ayyanger Commission of Enquiry declared:

> Between October 1947 to October 1963….[Bakshi] obtained pecuniary and other benefits for himself, for members of his family, for his other relatives and for some other persons in whom he was interested and allowed them to obtain or connived at their obtaining pecuniary and other benefits by exploiting the official positions held by him and that thereby he, his family and his relatives made considerable additions to their assets and pecuniary resources of…one and a half crores.[264]

The investigation detailed the benefits obtained by various members of Bakshi's family, in particular. It revealed that landowners were coerced into selling their land and were not adequately compensated; while others had their land encroached upon. The Bakshi family was also accused of exploiting the Low Income Group Housing Scheme and arranging illegal tiling and forest contracts as well as leases for cars, petrol, and cinemas. Moreover, they used government funds for personal expenses. The case was brought to the Indian Supreme Court—whose jurisdiction over the state's affairs happened under his government—where the chief

[263] Ibid.
[264] "The Jammu and Kashmir Government Gazette, 30 Jan 1965," Accessed From: Department of Home, Srinagar State Archives.

justice himself found Bakshi to be guilty.

This chapter has shown how Bakshi foregrounded Kashmir's economic concerns in the aftermath of Sheikh Abdullah's arrest. I have highlighted that while Bakshi was building on a number of Sheikh Abdullah's policies, his 'Naya Kashmir' was distinct in that he saw the creation of greater economic and financial ties with the Government of India as the only way to implement the economic goals of the manifesto. This created an in-built contradiction in his government's economic plan. In addition, because of Kashmir's internal and external compulsions, developmentalism—both in terms of discourse and practice—was directed towards not only local but also Indian and international concerns.

I have argued that although Bakshi intended to promote socialist economic modernization, his government's implementation of the economic plan of Naya Kashmir was undermined by the state's disputed status. While the standard of living may have improved for many of Kashmir's citizens, the state became overreliant on aid from the Government of India. Because of the overreliance on central aid, there was not much emphasis on self-sufficiency in the state and corruption became rampant. As the last section argues, the political compulsions behind these economic policies distracted the government from having a long-term, more effective economic development plan.

While it may then be tempting to view his government's developmentalist policies as a failure, it is important to see how they consolidated Bakshi's political authority in a critical period. I conclude that Bakshi's government did meet its short-term goals. On a local level, because the Government of India relied upon him to create legitimacy, Bakshi's savvy political acumen enabled him to extract funds for local projects and produce tangible results for Kashmir. As people's standard of living improved, increased financial and economic integration with India

allowed Kashmir to get a massive influx of money from Delhi in order to improve agriculture, develop industry, and create employment. Outside of Kashmir, state-led propaganda, which utilized tourism and Indian cinema, created a sense of normalcy in the region, which then heightened India's (and Bakshi's) position on Kashmir on the international stage. Because Kashmir was perceived as progressing economically as a result of its accession to India, the issue of plebiscite remained obsolete in the international arena.

What this chapter suggests, then, is that the focus on economic development was intended to displace questions of Kashmir's political future, and to a certain extent, Bakshi succeeded in doing so. Most importantly, the state government—and not the Government of India—was the driver behind these policies. The next chapter on the state government's education policies will discuss the impact of another important component of "progress" and its unintended consequences.

Chapter Two

Creating a Modern Kashmiri Subject: Education, Secularization and its Discontents

Introduction

In 1955, the Education Department of the Kashmir state received a petition from the town of Sopore in North Kashmir. In the petition, the student chair of the National Students Federation of Sopore, Abdul Samad, made an appeal to the department to establish an intermediate college in the town. He began by describing the central role the town played politically and economically. He stated that despite this role, the condition of education in Sopore had been "rendered poor" and a student could only get educated until matriculation. For further education, students were forced to go to Srinagar or other cities. He bemoaned that "because of this and unprecedented poverty, many of the students are forced to leave their education and their hopes are dashed to the ground."[1] Abdul Samad described how the people of Sopore had presented the desire to open an intermediate college to the Dogra government, but it had been met with deaf ears. He declared that "the funeral of the Dogra government has happened and people's rule (*awami raj*) has come and a New Kashmir is born and people who understand the pain and suffering of common people have come to power, we hope that this long standing demand of people of Sopore, Handwara, and Baramulla will be fulfilled."[2]

[1] File 1414, 16/Schools/1949, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[2] File 1414, 16/Schools/1949, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

Two years into Bakshi's government, the Education Department received hundreds of similar petitions from across Jammu and Kashmir.[3] Sent from *mohalla* (neighborhood) committees, public organizations, student groups, villages, and local National Conference party workers, these petitions requested the Education Department to establish schools and colleges for boys and girls in their areas. As one officer in the department declared, "the influx of such applications does not come to an end at all."[4] Unlike Abdul Samad, many of the petitioners were illiterate. After requesting a literate individual in their community to write the petition, community members, whose numbers ranged from twenty-five to fifty, would sign with their thumbprints.[5] A number of petitions called upon Bakshi's government to keep its promises to build schools as discussed during his recent tours of these communities.[6] Referring to Bakshi's rule as "awami raj" (people's rule), the petitions made reference to the progress that had been made under his government, and their communities' desire to take part in that development.

It is clear by the nature of the petitions that the people were aware that the new government had commenced a new education policy; the petitions, thus, provide a sense of how ordinary Kashmiris responded to this program. As the petition above illustrates, people within Kashmir expected Bakshi's government, especially in contrast to Dogra rule, to deliver on promises of educational and economic reform.

This chapter argues that the state government's educational policy was the cornerstone of constructing a modern, secular Kashmiri subject. Through state-led advances in education, such as free tuition until the university level, the creation and improvement of primary, secondary and professional schools, as well as the revision of education philosophy, syllabi and linguistic

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[3] While the Department of Education received petitions for the opening up of educational institutions in previous administrations, the numbers were significantly greater under Bakshi.
[4] File 1410 Nil/1955, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[5] See, for example, File 1334 247-B/55/1955, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[6] File 1410 Nil/1955, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

policies, the new government attempted to construct a distinct, secular modern Kashmiri identity. In doing so, the leadership debated the purpose, form, and content of education and it became central to debates over the identity of Kashmir as it was being produced in this moment. More than in any other sphere, educational policy drew extensively from the objectives laid out in the Naya Kashmir manifesto. Yet, their implementation on the ground was reflective of the conflicting aims and complex interests of the state government.

This chapter examines the multiple objectives of Bakshi's government in regards to its educational reform policies as well as the tensions surrounding their implementation. It highlights the ways in which the state government sought to use education to construct a secular modern Kashmiri subject. However, because the state paid particular attention to the empowerment of Kashmiri Muslims, this chapter highlights how educational developments, perhaps not by intent, but by default, became linked to the cultivation of a modern Kashmiri Muslim subject. As mentioned in the introduction, they were the primary demographic that the state was seeking to not only empower but also bring into line in the new political order. My use of the phrase "empowerment of Kashmiri Muslims" implies the accumulation of power vis-a-vis another group through various economic, political and social means. Alongside the large numbers of the Muslim peasantry that were empowered through land reform policies in the post-1947 period, in this chapter, I will discuss the ways in which education policies also played a critical role in Muslim empowerment in the early postcolonial period. This empowerment, however, was to have unintended consequences. It came at the cost of the group that had previously held the monopoly on education and employment—an elite minority class of Kashmiri Pandits who themselves had already felt discriminated against under the Dogras who favored non-Kashmiri Hindus for higher administrative positions. Under the post-Partition

governments, their previous stronghold in education was challenged as Muslims began to enroll in schools and colleges in larger numbers and became employed in various educational institutions. In addition, the state's attempts to produce a secular Kashmir alienated a number of Muslim groups, who argued that these efforts undermined the Muslim identity of its citizens. The evolving relationship between Pandits and Muslims in this critical moment will be the focus of the second half of this chapter. I contend that despite the attempt to produce a secular, modern Kashmiri identity, the state government's educational policies undermined the aims of Naya Kashmir in building a "united people of the state" and had a contradictory trajectory of producing increased Pandit-Muslim tension.[7] The same moment of opportunity for Kashmiri Muslims also created friction as the state government became mired in accusations of promoting communalism.

Those involved in educational policies came from a variety of backgrounds. While the top-level bureaucrats in the initial years of Bakshi's government were non-Kashmiris from the all-India administrative cadre including Asadullah Kazmi, who was the Director of Education under both Sheikh Abdullah and Bakshi, most of the inspectors, principals, registrars, headmasters/mistresses, and teachers were Kashmiri, both Pandit and Muslim. This chapter provides an important context for the larger dissertation with its focus on local voices and internal contestations. I engage with the ideas and practices of those directly involved with shaping educational affairs, and also the larger reception of educational policies in the public. This brings our attention to local aspirations, and the ways in which ordinary people became part of and contested the project of state reform. I draw upon memoirs of prominent educationists, bureaucratic correspondence on education, and oral interviews conducted with those who attended schools and colleges in Kashmir in the 1950s and 1960s.

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[7] *New Kashmir*, 39.

This chapter is divided into five sections, the first of which looks at education under Dogra rule, revealing the marginal position and experiences of Kashmiri Muslims and the efforts to transform the community's predicament before 1947. This context provides insight into the Muslim community's self-perception at this critical juncture and allows us to see the ways in which educational developments after 1947 served as an opportunity, producing modern Muslim subjects. The second section determines the overall context in which educational policies were being shaped, the educational aims of the Naya Kashmir manifesto, and provides an overview of the policies of Bakshi's government. This section underscores how educational policies paved the way for a new generation of Kashmiri Muslims to benefit from opportunities that were previously inaccessible to them. In the third section, I examine the intentions and purposes of educational reform and the curriculum, showcasing how the Kashmiri state envisioned a secular modern Kashmiri subject. The fourth section brings together the various contestations within the state with an analysis of its language policy. In the last section, I discuss how as education became more democratized, it led to increasing competition between communities, and tensions between Kashmiri Muslims, Pandits and the state emerged over admission and employment. I conclude with the implications of educational reform under Bakshi, showcasing how the progressive contours of state policies were undermined by the various contestations on the ground. But first, in order to trace changes and continuities between the colonial and postcolonial period, I examine education under the Dogras, and specifically the educational status of Kashmiri Muslims in the decades preceding Partition.

Kashmiri Muslims and Education under the Dogras (1846-1947)

As with most princely states, the Dogras were responsible for the education of their subjects, a majority of whom were Muslims. However, unlike the princely rulers of Mysore and

Baroda, who set up institutions of higher education that served as sites of resistance against colonial rule, the Dogras were far less invested in matters of education and borrowed heavily from colonial norms of education.[8] For most of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, indigenous *madrasas* (for Muslim boys) or *patshalas* (for Pandit boys) imparted basic religious education, Persian, Arabic or Sanskrit, and math to students. While Gulab Singh, the first Dogra ruler, was more concerned with consolidating his newly acquired territories, his successor, Ranbir Singh encouraged religious education and especially wanted to spread Hindu learning.[9] However, under both rulers, the state did not view the promotion of education amongst the masses as its priority, and specifically for the Kashmiris, very little infrastructure was set in place, for both Hindus and Muslims.[10] In 1890, there were only twenty-five government schools and education was restricted to the ruling elite.[11]

It was only in 1889, as the British sent a resident to Kashmir under Pratap Singh, that education became a central component of the drive towards state centralization. Nevertheless, as Chitrelekha Zutshi argues, policies were fraught with ambivalence towards mass education in general and Muslim education in particular.[12] This was due in part to Dogra desire to ensure that the state did not have a local elite that could demand a role in the bureaucracy, which was at the time primarily comprised of non-Kashmiris, including Urdu-speaking Punjabis, as well as a number of Kashmiri Pandits. If the majority community in the state began to get educated, the Dogras assumed they would make demands for employment in the bureaucracy. An important

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[8] Manu Bhagavan has shown how these rulers were critically involved in promoting institutions that emphasized an indigenous modernity. See Manu Bhagavan, *Sovereign Spheres: Princes, Education and Empire in Colonial India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).
[9] Chitralekha Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) 172.
[10] Iffat Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict and International Dispute* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).
[11] S. L. Seru, *History and Growth of Education in Jammu and Kashmir 1872-1973 (*Srinagar: Ali Mohammed and Sons, 1977) 61.
[12] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging,* 173.

point to note here is that although the Dogra state was modernizing in terms of its structure and reliance on a colonial bureaucracy, it did not necessarily seek to modernize the educational curriculum, certainly not amongst its majority Muslim population. At the turn of the century, compelled in part by the colonial state, the Dogras established a number of primary, middle and higher secondary schools and the Sri Pratap College, the first institution of higher education in the state. The principal beneficiaries of these policies were Kashmiri Pandits, who enjoyed greater access to the state due to their prevalence in the administration. Alongside the efforts of the state, colonial missionaries and private individuals, such as Tyndale Biscoe and Annie Besant, established schools catering to the elite, mostly Kashmiri Pandit, families of Srinagar. Muslim socio-religious reform organizations also prioritized education, founding a number of schools, including what would later be the Islamia College, for the urban class based in Srinagar.[13] By 1915, all religious and private institutions were under the purview of the state as they were given grants-in-aid. There were no higher educational and professional schools, however, and Kashmiris had to go either to Aligarh or Lahore for further studies.

Nonetheless, despite these efforts, the educational statistics for Kashmiri Muslims remained dismal in comparison to the overall number of Muslims throughout the state and in comparison to the Pandits. In 1910, there were only 15 Muslim males who had completed higher

[13] At the turn of the century, the head of the Jamia Masjid in downtown Srinagar, Mirwaiz Maulana Rasul Shah, founded the Anjuman Nusrat ul Islam, being one of the first to make demands for the education of Muslims in the Valley. The aim of the *anjuman* was to spread modern (defined here as sciences, math, and English) and Islamic education to the Muslims of the state. The Mirwaiz was encouraged by his networks of Muslim religious leaders across the subcontinent to work for the empowerment of Kashmiri Muslims, and was often referred to as the "Sir Sayyid" of Kashmir after the founder of Aligarh. In 1905, the *anjuman* established the Islamia High school, which had a curriculum that combined both the sciences and Islamic education. Islamia became a key institution for the development of modern education for Muslims in the first half of the 20th century. Indeed, a significant number of those involved in the Naya Kashmir period came from the ranks of the Islamia highschool and other affiliated schools of the *anjuman.* See Showkat Ahmad Dar, "Role Of Socio-Religious Reform Movements Among Muslims In Kashmir," *International Journal of Innovative Research and Development|| ISSN 2278–0211* 2.5 (2013); Yoginder Sikand, "The emergence and development of the Jama 'at-i-Islami of Jammu and Kashmir (1940s–1990)," *Modern Asian Studies* 36.03 (2002): 705-751; Chitralekha Zutshi, "Religion, state, and community: Contested identities in the Kashmir valley, c. 1880–1920," *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 23.1 (2000): 109-128.

education as compared to 453 Hindu males (per thousand of population).[14] By 1921, the number for Muslims had only increased to 19, and for Hindus, 508.[15] As more primary schools began to open, the number of Muslim students slowly rose. Maharaja Hari Singh also attempted to enforce a system of "jabri" (forced) schools in the 1930s, a scheme that did not last long. In higher education, the number of Muslims remained limited. In 1926, of the 480 students in SP College, only seven were Muslim.[16] Even by 1941, the literacy rates for Muslims were staggering: only 1.6 percent of Kashmiri Muslims could read and write.[17] The statistics for female education were even lower.

Comparing their status with Kashmiri Pandits, in the second decade of the twentieth century, an emerging Muslim leadership—those that would go on to form the Muslim Conference, and later, the National Conference, comprised of elite, urban males, criticized the Dogras for their seemingly discriminatory policies against Kashmiri Muslims. Linking the acquisition of education to better employment opportunities in the administration, as the Dogras had feared, Kashmiri Muslims began to take greater interest in educational affairs, even demanding the involvement of the colonial state.[18] The Dogras became defensive, arguing that the responsibility for the education of Kashmiri Muslims belonged to its leadership, and that the poor statistics were a result of Muslim apathy towards education, not due to a lack of

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[14] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging,* 182.
[15] Ibid.
[16] G Rasool and Minakshi Chopra, *Education in Jammu and Kashmir: Issues and Documents* (Jammu: Jay Kay Book House, 1986).
[17] Yoginder Sikand "Emergence and Development of Jama'at I Islami of Jammu and Kashmir," 705-751.
[18] The Kashmiri Muslim elites presented a memorandum to viceroy Lord Reading on his visit to Kashmir in 1924. In the memorandum, the leadership demanded government jobs and better educational facilities for Muslims, in addition to rights for peasants, the abolition of forced labor, and the restoration of all mosques currently under the control of the Dogras to the Muslim community. For more on the 1924 Memorandum, see Mridu Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Islam, Rights, and the History of Kashmir (*Ranikhet, Permanent Black, 2004) 255.

opportunities or a policy of discrimination. The state argued that because a vast majority of Kashmiri Muslims were peasants, they did not place value on educating their children.[19]

In a number of autobiographies and memoirs written by educated Muslims who experienced Dogra rule, the period is overwhelmingly categorized as one of backwardness and illiteracy. Interestingly, the reasons provided for this backward status vary, reflecting the attitudes of the state as well as the Muslim leadership. Sheikh Abdullah narrates in his autobiography that aside from a number of Muslim elite families, most Muslims did not send their children to school, as "they were not interested in education at all. A major reason for this was their poverty and lack of encouragement and indifference on the part of the government."[20] In addition, he narrates that when Muslims like himself did manage to get educated outside of the state, upon their return to Kashmir they were unable to secure employment. Sheikh Abdullah's recollection of attitudes towards modern education focuses more on the Dogra state's inability to provide opportunities for Kashmiri Muslims as well as their own conditioning due to poverty.

Shamla Mufti (1928-2008), one of the first female Muslim educationists recalls a different perspective in her autobiography:

> Education was not usual. Elders were nervous that if a girl became literate, then she would write letters to strange boys and according to the old understandings, those boys who got an English education would become Christian. In reality, because of ignorance, our mindset was very humble and it was thought that with obtaining English education, a person would be in contact with the outside world. Because of unfavorable conditions in the outside world, we did not have much contact with it.[21]

For Shamla, it is the Muslim community's own fears about education and change that contributed to its backwardness.

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[19] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging,* 182.
[20] Mohammad Sheikh Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar: An Autobiography:* translated from the Urdu by Mohammad Amin (Srinagar: Gulshan Books, 2013) 27.
[21] Shamla Mufti, *Chilman se Chaman*, published autobiography in Urdu of Shamla Mufti, Ex-Principal of Government Women's College, Maulana Azad Road *(*Srinagar: Meezan Publishers, 1994) 30.

Agha Ashraf Ali (b. 1922), who was an Inspector of Schools and later Professor of English at the University of Kashmir describes the disparate situation of Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims as contributing to Muslim backwardness. In his memoir, Agha Ashraf, who belonged to a prominent Kashmiri Shi'a family in Srinagar that had close ties with the Dogras, writes that in 1937, when he entered the school, there were 700 Pandit boys and 150 Muslim boys enrolled.[22] He describes the Pandit boys as being very intelligent and hard-working, and says that in their homes, there was a nurturing environment for reading and writing. Many of them would come from families that had status in the broader society, as they were positioned well in the Dogra hierarchy. In comparison, he says that Muslims were backward; they neither had educational nor social status. Agha Ashraf is himself placed in a position higher than the other Muslim students, as his grandfathers served the Dogras. Nonetheless, even for him, the position of Muslims in relation to Pandits was bleak.

Whether the issue was one of Muslim attitudes or Dogra discrimination, or even as Zutshi suggests, Muslim resistance to state control of education, what is important to note is that in all of these narratives, Muslims were perceived as being backward, a community that was still waiting to be "modern." These contestations over education also led to a broader recognition of Muslims as a distinguishable community with distinct interests in the state structures of the valley.[23] As Anupama Rao argues, the focus on "community," became the generative ground for political identity in the colonial era.[24] In order to obtain political recognition, groups had to "look like or perform the role of religious communities."[25] We will see how claims to political

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[22] Agha Ashraf Ali, *Kuch to Likhye, Loag Kehte Hain (*Srinagar, Shalimar Art Press, 2010) 26.
[23] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, 14.
[24] Anupama Rao, "Ambedkar and the Politics of Minority: A Reading," in Dipesh Chakrabarty, Rochona Majumdar, and Andrew Sartori (ed), *From the Colonial to the Postcolonial: India and Pakistan in Transition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007) 137-158.
[25] Ibid.

recognition continued to be framed along religious lines in the postcolonial period. In addition, whatever the state's intentions towards its Muslim subjects might have been, even the Muslim elite that had access to education perceived themselves as being discriminated against. Moreover, their self-construction of their marginal position under the Dogras, as exemplified by the writings of Sheikh Abdullah, Shamla Mufti and Agha Ashraf, allows us to envision the "newness" that the educational policies of the post-Partition governments provided for them and many others.

As mentioned in the introduction, Muslim disenchantment with the Dogra government was further incited by the events of July 1931, when the Dogra army killed 22 Kashmiris who had been protesting the prosecution of Abdul Qadeer Khan Ghazi, an Afghan working in Kashmir who had previously given a rousing speech on Dogra atrocities against the Muslim community.[26] In the course of the aftermath of these events, an elite Kashmiri Muslim leadership emerged, many of its members having spent time outside of Kashmir. They spoke out against Dogra rule, and demanded that the state address the community's educational and economic concerns. In response to the political unrest, the Dogras formed the Glancy Commission, comprised of leaders from varying religious and regional backgrounds to look into the grievances of their respective communities. The commission conceded that the Muslims were excluded from the representative institutions of the state, despite being a majority.[27] For the improvement of Muslim education, the commission suggested that the Education Department hire more Muslim teachers, employ more religious instructors, or mullahs, to teach Arabic, and provide special scholarships for Muslim students. Most importantly, at the request of the Commission, the Education Department in 1932 created a post of a "Mohammedan Inspector" to

[26] For more on the 1931 agitation, see Ian Copland, "Islam and political mobilization in Kashmir, 1931-34," *Pacific Affairs* (1981): 228-259.
[27] Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 275.

manage the educational affairs of Muslim students.[28] Furthermore, in selecting candidates for scholarships to study abroad, the state selected one Muslim amongst nine Kashmiri Pandits.[29] It might be tempting to view these developments as a shift in Dogra attitudes towards Muslim education. However, these opportunities were given to a select number of Muslims, many from families of political influence. They were at best conciliatory efforts to quell the unrest, not reflective of a change in Dogra ideology towards its Muslim subjects. By 1947, a vast majority of Muslims remained illiterate.

Chitrelekha Zutshi sees the Muslim leadership's focus on education in the 1920s and 1930s as a way for them to consolidate their position within the community and battle for political supremacy.[30] While that may have been the case, contestations over education allow us to see the inbuilt hierarchies of the Dogra state, and the very real, and direct ways in which certain groups were privileged over others. At the same time, while the movement against the Dogras was as a result of marginalization in education and employment, it was increasingly seen as being divisive along religious—Hindu versus Muslim—lines.

Two issues emerged under the Dogras that would come to play a bigger role after 1947. The first pertained to Pandit-Muslim relations and the second, contestations over linguistic policies. Here it must be highlighted that the Dogra state played a critical role in creating friction between the two communities by casting their interests as divergent and clearly demarcating cultural and religious borders between the two, as well as providing patronage to one over the other. As Mridu Rai demonstrates, the state was built upon a quest for legitimacy that used Hinduism to buttress its claims of sovereignty. This was done primarily through the strengthening of Hindu religious sites and interests, which allowed Pandits to collect

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[28] Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects,* 258-265.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, 169.

documentary evidence to support their claims to shrines that were disputed between the two communities.[31] Meanwhile, the state refused to spend money to develop Muslim sites. Zutshi adds that the Dogras also reified the idea of separate religious communities through educational policies—they provided students with basic instruction in their own religion and had a sectarian policy of Urdu for Muslims and Hindi for Hindus.[32] These policies established a firm ground for tensions to emerge between the two communities.

Mridu Rai argues that despite sharing a common culture, Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims saw their political interests as widely diverging because of Dogra "patterns of legitimation which allowed the Hindus of Kashmir to exclude Muslims in the contest for the symbolic political and economic resources of the state."[33] For the elite Pandits, the stronghold in the educational and administrative sectors was one that "determined his very being."[34] While education was seen as a step for gaining greater political leverage for other communities, Rai argues that for these Pandits, conditioned by historical memory and a sense of community identity, it was seen as an intrinsic right. This entailed that the Pandits considered merit as being intrinsic to their very being; if Muslims were unable to reach their status, it was due to an intrinsic *lack* of merit, *not* the structural conditions of the state.[35]

In the 1920s, a group of Pandits led the earliest agitations over representation in state services in Kashmir against the influx of Punjabis who had taken over the Dogra administration. Maharaja Hari Singh rewarded their efforts by passing a state subject law that clearly defined the parameters of who would be able to work and own property in the state. At the time, Pandits did not view the Muslims as a threat, as they were far behind in terms of education. However, as

[31] Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 206.
[32] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging,* 193-194.
[33] Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects,* 14.
[34] Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects,* 245.
[35] Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects,* 245.

soon as the first generation of Muslims began to mobilize in the late 1920s and 1930s demanding special concessions to overcome their educational and representational backwardness, Pandit privileges stood on shaky ground.[36] A Pandit political identity became defined by a shared urgency of restoring their previous stronghold. Any attempts of affirmative action for Muslims became contentious. For example, in 1930, to redress inequalities in employment, a flyer was posted for a job in the Srinagar Municipality that welcomed only Muslim applicants. After some Pandits labeled the flyer as being "communal,", meaning it explicitly privileged one religious group over another, it was withdrawn.[37]

Members of the Kashmiri Muslim elite who were able to benefit from education under the Dogras recollect this time as being one of emerging communal tensions and polarization along Hindu-Muslim lines. They also recall the poor treatment Muslim students received in schools and colleges. From their writings, we can glean that before 1947, Muslim students were acutely aware of their second-class status. Despite being a majority of the population, there were very few Muslim students in comparison to Kashmiri Pandits and non-Kashmiris. Not only did the Muslim students feel discriminated against in terms of admissions, they also felt acutely disadvantaged at school itself. As Agha Ashraf recalls in his memoir, the Muslim students were aware of the debates happening in the subcontinent between the Muslim League and Congress, and they began to see their educational weaknesses in Kashmir as a result of the Hindu-Muslim issue.[38] During this time, a Pandit professor selected Agha Ashraf to serve as the secretary of the Historical Society in his college. He says that upon hearing that he was appointed, ninety percent of the mostly Hindu students participated in a walkout, and the entire college was brought to a standstill. Prior to this incident, Agha Ashraf describes himself as one of the few Muslim

[36] Ibid.
[37] Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects,* 249.
[38] Ali, *Kuch to Likhye*, 27.

students who would speak to the other Muslim students about the virtues of Gandhi and Nehru; after the walkout, they began to tease him for his views. In response to the walkout and other grievances, he, along with Syed Mir Qasim, who was to become one of the chief ministers of Kashmir, gathered the 150 Muslim students in the college and created a "Muslim Block." In response to their activities, the leaders of the National Conference, Sheikh Abdullah and Bakshi, came to Agha Ashraf and urged him to stop the activities of the Muslim Block, as it would disrupt the recent shift in the anti-Dogra movement which sought to bring together the various communities in the state (the transformation of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference). The principal of the college also informed him that if he didn't end the Muslim Block, he would have to leave the college. Agha Ashraf did as he was ordered, and was called a traitor by the other Muslim students.

Agha Ashraf's experience in the college sheds light on a number of issues. While being a vocal supporter of secularism, he was drawn to working on behalf of better rights for Muslim students based on his own experience of bias. He does not see this as being contradictory. Yet, in the atmosphere of the college, the non-Muslim students saw a concern for the status of Muslim students as a communal move, and Agha Ashraf was lumped into the broader pro-Muslim League student politics. The news of the Muslim Block being of concern to the National Conference leadership at the time is also important: it shows the political and social importance of college campuses at the time, and the need to maintain control over educational institutions. As we will see, this control of schools and colleges continued to play a role under Bakshi.

According to Agha Ashraf, Muslim students also felt discriminated against in terms of grades and prizes given. They complained that even if they scored higher than their Pandit

classmates, they would still come in second.[39] It was not just their position in school that was constantly under threat, however; some felt that Islam itself was being denigrated in educational institutions. In 1943, the Crime Investigation Department (CID) sent a report to the Department of Education describing an incident at Sri Pratap College involving the college magazine, the Pratap. In the article, a Pandit student wrote about the backwardness of Islam in relation to women, arguing that the [Muslim] conquest tended to degrade the position of women as the Quran permits polygamy and easy access to divorce. An extract from the CID diary on October 13, 1943 describes the tense environment at the college as Muslim students under the banner of the Muslim Students Federation protested the article shouting, "Long live Islam" and demanded the college authorities that the article be removed from the magazine.[40] With the intervention of key Muslim professors and students, the tense situation was mitigated.

As evidenced by these examples, it appears that the atmosphere in the colleges in Kashmir before 1947 was tense. The mere presence of intelligence officers on college campuses meant that they were seen as contentious and prone to conflict. The politics of all-India wide organizations, including the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League, and the Hindu Mahasaba were making inroads into Kashmiri society. In addition, there was also a local logic that was slowly unfolding. Kashmiri Muslims felt marginalized by the Dogra state's policies, and they increasingly raised their voices against educational disparities. In this time of great flux, a number of Muslim students attending colleges in Kashmir felt constricted and limited by the policies of the school authorities and the discriminatory attitudes of the non-Muslim students in the colleges.

[39] Ali, *Kuch to Likhye*, 29.
[40] File 702, C/11/34/1943, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

Under the Dogras, tensions between Pandits and Muslims spilled over into linguistic debates, which were to continue even after 1947. Before 1905, the official language of the state was Persian. Despite Kashmiri being the dominant language of the people in the state, Urdu, in both the Perso-Arabic and Devnagri scripts, was chosen as the language of the administration and the medium of instruction. This was not unique, as Urdu was the official language of the Punjab as well during colonial rule, despite Punjabi being the dominant language of its people. This was because Urdu was seen as the language that would integrate the province into broader structures of colonial authority.[41] In Kashmir, while there was little debate on the use of Urdu over Kashmiri, there were heated debates on the script. The proponents of Devnagari were Hindu groups that were protesting the Perso-Arabic script as being principally Muslim.

The Director of Education under Maharaja Hari Singh was K.G. Saiyidain, a prominent Muslim educationist who would go on to become the Minister of Education and the Educational Advisor to the Government of India. Saiyidain attempted to implement the suggestions made by the Glancy Commission, including those pertaining to improving educational opportunities for Muslims. Because of this, Saiyidain emerged as a contentious figure amongst the region's Hindus, who submitted a series of petitions to the Maharaja claiming that the department under his leadership discriminated against them. Their primary complaints revolved around the linguistic policies of the state. In one example, the president of the Jammu Kashmir Hindu Sabha stated that while the government had ordered that the medium of instruction in government schools would be simple Urdu written and taught in both Devanagari and Perso-Arabic scripts, the textbooks were all in Persian and contained Arabic and Persian words. Devnagari textbooks were limited, and Muslim heroes were described in a beautiful language while Hindu heroes

[41] Farina Mir, *The Social Space of Language: Vernacular Culture in British Colonial Punjab (*Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

were accorded the reverse treatment. He added that the education department was carrying out an organized crusade against Hindu culture and Hindu interests.[42]

Another incident occurred when the Chief Inspectress of Girls Schools, E. Chawner, submitted an order that declared that Hindi-speaking teachers should learn Urdu as an additional vernacular in order to facilitate correspondence within the department.[43] Her circular was condemned by a number of teachers and Hindu organizations in the state, who saw it as a conspiracy to "keep away the Hindi-knowing ladies from Indian culture and liberty of literary thought."[44] Chawner was accused of having struck to the root of the religious, social and cultural rights of the Hindu and Sikh populations and was made to issue a defense, saying that the circular was just to make the jobs of the teachers easier—there was no intention to compel the Hindi-speaking teachers to learn Urdu. In the end, Chawner retracted the circular and the matter was temporarily dropped.

These two incidents show that the Hindi-Urdu linguistic debates that had been taking place in the rest of the subcontinent since the late nineteenth century had also arisen in Kashmir. There were heated debates over the use of particular Arabized or Sanskritized vocabulary as well as the use of a script –Devanagari or Perso-Arabic. As Christopher King has shown, the differentiation of Hindi from Urdu throughout the Northwest Provinces and Oudh became one where Hindi was seen as being for Hindus and Urdu for Muslims.[45] Despite the use of Persian, and later Urdu in both scripts in the Dogra state bureaucracy, the use of Persian or Urdu words in textbooks was seen as propagating "Islamic ideals" and "foreign Muslim culture." Many called

[42] File 1250, C/8/17/1944, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[43] File 1474 c.19.46.1939, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[44] Ibid.
[45] See Christopher R. King, *One Language, Two Scripts: The Hindi Movement in Nineteenth Century North India (*Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1994).

for Saiyidain's resignation. These examples are not unique; there are many other instances that emerge in opposition to any promotion of Urdu in the state as being anti-Hindi and anti-Hindu.

It is important to note that Kashmiris—both Pandit and Muslim—did not raise the issue of the Kashmiri language playing a role in both educational and administrative affairs. Zutshi correctly argues that this is primarily due to the class-based biases of the leadership. If the language of administration or medium of instruction was Kashmiri, it would benefit the masses and the privilege of the elites in both communities would be challenged.[46]

My lengthy treatment of education under the Dogras underscores a number of key points that would come to play a role under Bakshi's government. One, access to state resources was largely determined by one's religious affiliation. A vast majority of Muslims remained illiterate up until 1947, and educational developments primarily benefited Kashmiri Pandits. Two, whether Muslim marginalization was by design or not, even those elite Muslims who had access to educational opportunities still felt that there were biases at the level of representation and treatment. Any concessions that were made towards Muslim education were in response to agitation; they were not part of state ideology. Three, an emerging Muslim leadership was able to capitalize on the issue of education as being linked to greater economic and political disparities between Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims. Finally, Pandit-Muslim tensions began to emerge on the question of representation and linguistic policy.

Education in the Naya Kashmir Manifesto

When the National Conference met to write the manifesto, they prioritized the equality of all citizens in the state, regardless of their nationality, religion, race, or birth in all spheres of life. Any restriction of these rights, or the "establishment of any direct or indirect privileges for any

[46] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging,* 194-195.

citizens or class of citizens on account of nationalist, race or birth," was punishable by law.[47] In the realm of education, the manifesto declared that all citizens had a right to education, which would be compulsory and free up until higher education even in the most remote parts of the state.[48] The plan also called for a system of scholarships for poor students in higher education. The mother-tongue was to be the medium of instruction in primary schools. Education was meant to align with the National Economic Plan, so that it "should not be merely liberal, but also technical," and free technical and vocational education would also be provided for the workers in factories.[49] The plan called for the creation of district colleges, as well as a network of higher, middle and primary schools that were liberal as well as technical. The state would also provide research scholarships for training abroad on topics pertaining to the economic plan. Women were given equal rights to men, and the plan called for an increase in women's schools and colleges.

While the national languages of the state were Kashmiri, Dogri, Balti, Dardi, Punjabi, Urdu, and Hindu, Urdu was to be the *lingua franca* of the state.[50] The state was responsible for developing these languages, by providing scripts, translations, dictionaries, publishing, and scholarships to study these languages. A "national university," was to focus on the culture of all nationalities in the state. The authors of the manifesto were keen to ensure that all regions and communities in the state felt that they were part of the New Kashmir, a unified state that nonetheless celebrated and developed the diversity of its citizens.

In 1947, power shifted from the Dogras to the National Conference under Sheikh Abdullah. His government attempted to prioritize Naya Kashmir's educational aims, but it was constrained in a number of ways. A number of primary schools were opened, the University of

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47 *New Kashmir*, 13.
48 *New Kashmir,* 39.
49 *New Kashmir*, 38.
50 *New Kashmir*, 21.

Jammu and Kashmir (the first university in the state) was formed in 1948, and the Women's College was established in 1950.[51] Despite the increase in the education budget in comparison to Dogra rule, private and aided schools were closed and parents had to pay a tuition fee, which many in the peasantry could not afford.[52] The department did not have enough funding on its own to finance a number of educational projects and was in need of an outside source. While the Sheikh's government was open to taking funds from private bodies, it was hesitant to rely on the Government of India and tried to have greater autonomy in educational affairs.[53] This is similar to its stance of having greater economic and financial autonomy. In the few newspapers that were allowed at the time, mostly in Jammu, there were complaints that the new government was not spending enough on education and that the quality of education was deteriorating.[54] As we will see, Bakshi's government, just as on matters of economic development, would depart from his predecessor's attitudes against greater Indian investment in education.

Nonetheless, an important development did take place under Sheikh Abdullah: Kashmiri was made the medium of instruction for primary school children in Kashmiri-speaking areas (Urdu remained the official language of the state). A Kashmiri Script Committee was set up under the authority of Ghulam Ahmed Ashai, designed with the task of creating a modern script that was to be rational and more scientific and would be easy for the general population to adopt. Members of the committee travelled throughout the region to gain the input of teachers and those who were well versed with the language. After the Sheikh's arrest, however, Ashai was also

[51] The university initially was only an examining body. Under Bakshi, it would go on to having its own departments and programs.

[52] In a response to a critique of closing down private and aided schools in the newspaper *Desh Sewak*, the Under Secretary to the Minister of Education states that this action was prompted with the sole objective of putting education purely on national lines and of purging educational institutions of communalism and other sectarian ideologies which are stressed in denominational institutions (See File 237, Edu-10.15/NIL, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives).

[53] File number 75, Edu/106/D/5, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives and File 95, Edu 82-50, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

[54] File 1684 50/Edu/1952, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

arrested and the Kashmiri script project was brought to a standstill. Nonetheless, the attempt to foreground Kashmiri as the medium of instruction was important; it was linked to the aims of the manifesto, a vision that Bakshi would depart from.

Once Bakshi came to power, he opened the floodgates of central government aid; as a result, the Education Department was able to propose and implement a variety of educational projects. Indeed, the internal and external political compulsions that informed the government's economic policies also played a role in educational affairs. In addition, the Education Department had to contend with a rival political ideology. The Jamaat-i-Islam was one of the primary groups contesting the educational vision of the government at this time, presenting a competing mode of education that brought together traditional Islamic sciences and modern, scientific education. The organization had opened a number of private schools throughout the Kashmir Valley. Unlike other schools run by Muslim *anjumans* (such as the schools affiliated with the Anjuman Nusrat ul Islam), the schools run by the Jamaat did not receive any grant-in-aids from the state. These schools were increasing in popularity and reach, especially in major cities and towns outside of Srinagar. Yoginder Sikand argues that this is because they provided middle class Muslims with an alternative to what they felt was an onslaught by government schools that were promoting Indian cultural imperialism.[55] While Sikand does not specify what he means by the promotion of "Indian cultural imperialism," it was perhaps the secular nature of the state's curriculum—which was seen as Indian cultural imperialism—that supporters of the Jamaat opposed. In his memoirs, Qari Saifuddin, a member of the Jamaat at the time, mentions how he saw an image in a local paper that had a body and three heads—one head was Muslim, another Hindu, and the last Sikh. The caption under the image stated that Naya Kashmir was to

[55] Sikand, "Emergence and Development of Jama'at-I-Islam," 733-734.

be the religion of Kashmir; it looked to be three "but they are all one."[56] Saifuddin was enraged by this presentation of Naya Kashmir, which seemed to erase religious difference and asks, "Is this really to be the religion of Kashmir?" With its competing mode of modernization, it was perhaps this perceived "erasure" of Muslim identity in the government schools that attracted many Kashmiri Muslims to the Jamaat. In response to the popularity of the Jamaat schools, the state was compelled to assert its own vision for education. What was this vision? What steps did the government take to reform education? What was the impact of these policies? It is to these questions we now turn.

A Time to Hope? An Overview of Educational Policy

On August 9, 1953, less than a day after Sheikh Abdullah's arrest, Bakshi broadcast a policy speech on Radio Kashmir. As mentioned in the previous chapter, in his speech, he highlighted the reasons why Sheikh Abdullah's former colleagues removed him from power and listed some of the immediate reforms his government would implement in order to quell the unrest in the state. Educational reform was prioritized as a policy objective; the new government promised to improve teacher salaries, abolish fees, provide textbooks, develop the national languages (including Kashmiri, Dogri and Ladakhi) and provide scholarships to spread education amongst the backward classes, including Kashmiri Muslims, Harijans, Sikhs, Ladakhis, Gujjars and Bakerwals (nomadic groups).[57]

Within weeks of being installed, Bakshi's government made education free up to the university level.[58] The groundbreaking significance of this policy cannot be overestimated. Kashmir was the only state in the Indian Union to take such a step. In doing so, Bakshi's

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[56] Qari Saifuddin, *Vadi-i-Purkhar* (Srinagar: Markazi Maktaba Jama'at-i-Islami Jammu and Kashmir, 1980) 33.
[57] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Crisis in Kashmir Explained" (Srinagar: Lalla Rookh Publications, 1953) 10-11.
[58] Directorate of Information and Broadcasting, "Jammu and Kashmir, 1953-54: A Review of the Achievements of the Bakshi Government" (Srinagar: Ranbir Printing Press, 1954).

government exhibited acute political acumen as the increase in tuition fees under Sheikh Abdullah had resulted in a series of hunger strikes and agitations.[59] Perhaps, as the new government wanted to avoid all political complications, it determined that one of the primary ways to appease Kashmiris in the aftermath of the Sheikh's arrest would be to remove fees altogether. But this policy was also one of the cornerstores of the Naya Kashmir manifesto's educational goals. Nevertheless, according to the state, over 150,000 students were impacted by this policy in its first year alone.[60]

With the influence of leftists in its administration, Bakshi's government undertook a series of steps that made education more accessible to a broad cross-section of Kashmiri society. G.M. Sadiq, who was appointed the Minister of Education and Health under Bakshi, and later became Chief Minister, drafted the educational policy of the government in 1955. Sadiq was an avowed communist, having spent time with leading communists in the subcontinent, including B.P.L. Bedi and his wife Frida, on educational matters under Sheikh's administration. All three—Sadiq, Bedi and Frida—were architects of the manifesto, and Sadiq's educational policy plan in 1955 drew heavily from its precursor. Other left-leaning educationists in Kashmir, including the principal of the Women's College, Mehmooda Ali Shah, were also involved in the implementation of the plan. Emphasis was placed on having a progressive educational policy that was to primarily meet the economic goals of the state. The budget for education went from being nearly six percent of the state's total revenue in 1950 to twelve percent by 1956, and the total expenditure on education increased up to 500 percent.[61] A large portion of the budget went towards building primary, secondary and higher secondary schools in both rural and urban areas

[59] File 1651 Edu-726-US/1948, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[60] Directorate of Information and Broadcasting, "Jammu and Kashmir, A Review of the Achievements of the Bakshi government 1953-1954."
[61] S. L. Seru, *History and Growth,* 176.

throughout the state. Emphasis was placed on universal primary education. Mobile schools were also provided for the nomadic Gujjar and Bakerwal groups.[62] The government placed importance not just on urban centers like Srinagar, but throughout the region. The total enrollment of students in 1950 was 107,233. Within a decade, the number had increased to 276,351, an increase of 250 percent; boys' enrollment increased 125 percent and girls' enrollment increased 400 percent. The number of educational institutions also nearly tripled from 1330 in 1950 to 3653 by 1960.[63] In order to keep a wider network of institutions under state patronage, the government gave private and religious institutions grants-in-aid.[64] It also provided a number of scholarships for students of backward classes, including Muslims, Harijans, and females, similar to steps being taken on an all-India level. Finally, the government hired thousands of teachers, a majority of whom were Muslim. The total number of teachers employed by the state in 1950 was 4261; by 1960 it had doubled to 10,330.[65] Many female teachers were hired. To attract more people to teaching, the government raised the salaries of teachers. Through these initial policies, education became much more accessible to a greater number of people throughout the state and became especially available to Muslims and females. In 1941, only 1.6 percent of Kashmiri Muslims could read and write, and in 1961, close to the end of Bakshi's rule, this increased to 11.03 percent.[66]

Bakshi's government also made a number of critical developments in higher education by creating professional colleges and increasing access to colleges. In 1947, there were 3029 men and women enrolled in college; by 1960, this number had increased to 8385.[67] Before Bakshi,

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[62] File 1007 53-B/53/1954, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[63] Seru, *History and Growth,* 150.
[64] These institutions were run by various Muslim *anjumans* or Hindu societies. They combined the study of Arabic and the Quran with math and sciences.
[65] G Rasool and Minakshi Chopra, *Education in Jammu and Kashmir,* 591.
[66] Sikand, "Emergence and Development of Jama'at I Islam, 705-751.
[67] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Expansion of Education" (Lalla Rookh Publications: Srinagar, 1961)

there were no engineering or medical colleges in the state. Kashmiris would have to go to cities across India or abroad. Due to significant pressure from students and their families, a medical and engineering college was established in Srinagar. The National Institute of Technology and the Government Medical College were both founded in the second half of his government. With the development of these professional institutions, hundreds of Kashmiris, especially those from Muslim families, enrolled, and social mobility became a reality: many began to ascend into the middle and upper classes. Indeed, in contemporary popular discourse, this is one of the most memorable developments of Bakshi's government; he is credited with changing the futures and fortunes of hundreds of families. A vibrant Muslim professional class now replaced the elite class of Muslim and Pandit families that had maintained a financial and social monopoly due to their links to the Dogra state. However, it is important to note that the recipients of these scholarships or opportunities were promoted through a network of patronage that rewarded those who were of "sound and steady political views" and whose families were involved or invested in Bakshi's rule.[68]

While the government initiated a number of reforms, developments in education were not simply a top-down approach. Kashmiri Muslims, clamoring for greater opportunities, also played an agentive role in shaping educational policy. If they ever had misgivings about education under the Dogras, these sentiments were overruled by the proactive approach of the new government. Bakshi's government provided more scope and opportunity for average Kashmiris to advocate for better educational benefits, and people responded enthusiastically. Zutshi argues that the Kashmiri Muslim leadership under the Dogras also had agency in their negotiations with the state; what is different about the post-Partition state is that it was not just the leadership that was situated in a position to negotiate with the state—it was everyday, common people. During his

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[68] File 1001 Edu-278/C/54/1954, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

Friday *durbar*, tours throughout the state, as well as his visits to Indian states, Bakshi encountered Kashmiris from all walks of life.[69] As evidenced by the petitions, many would also write directly to Bakshi. They would urge him to open up a school in their village, provide a scholarship for their son or daughter, support an educational journal or approve a text for distribution in schools, or improve the infrastructure of their institution. These demands were then taken to the Education Department, and played a role in crafting state policies. The agentive role taken on by ordinary people, as evidenced by their letters and petitions, underscores the notion that there was buy-in from within Kashmiri society for the new project of the government; educational developments, then, enables us to see how Naya Kashmir gained resonance amongst Kashmiris. Furthermore, despite increased economic and political integration with the Government of India, the state government exhibited a significant amount of autonomy in its day-to-day decisions at the local level, including formulating its education policy and curriculum, the content and medium of instruction, and deciding qualifications for entry into various programs. Thus, while it might be tempting to see developments in education as seeking to only produce Indianization in Kashmir, as we will see, they were in fact also constitutive of local contestations and aspirations.

Educational Reform: Creating a Modern Kashmiri Subject

How did the government envision creating a modern Kashmiri subject through its educational policies? What did it mean to be modern in this time? In this section, I highlight how the government intended to produce a citizenry that could be productive and contribute to the economic demands of a revolutionary society; be well rounded in the arts, sports, and social service; and serve the secular ideals of Naya Kashmir.

[69] Interview with Author, Ghulam Hassan Shah, Srinagar, Jun. 12, 2014.

Modernity in the context of Kashmir was situated in direct contrast to life under the Dogras, which was seen as a time of backwardness, poverty, superstition, illiteracy, and isolation from the outside world. Modern education was based upon a desire to cultivate well roundedness amongst students, and prepare them for a life of productivity in an increasingly revolutionizing society. As with a number of modernizing states, the Kashmiri state saw investment in education as making a significant contribution towards economic growth.[70] Policies and initiatives were thus created to uplift the masses, bringing them into line with middle class sensibilities of hard work, civic duty, cleanliness and leisure. In many ways, then, Naya Kashmir was both a class-based program of the Kashmiri elites and upper classes that wanted to imbue the middle and lower classes with a particular set of modernizing concerns and attitudes, as one as well in which the latter were active in shaping its implementation on the ground.

The government wanted to ensure that a student would be able to be a *productive* citizen of Naya Kashmir, one that could contribute to its economic progress. And so, in accordance with the manifesto, emphasis was placed on technical and vocational training. At the primary level, the department created "activity schools," where "children would learn by doing things, things that would be related to their daily life and that would be connected with their immediate surroundings."[71] Craft and play had a prominent place in their education. English was not taught; emphasis was on the mother tongue and Urdu and writing in excellent calligraphy. A standard primary school curriculum consisted of classes in health and hygiene, arithmetic, basic science, civic sense, and basic history and geography of the state and India. The history of Kashmir was taught through talks and plays about the rudiments of the new social structure. After their

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[70] Roger Dale, "Learning to be…What? Shaping Education in Developing Societies: Introduction to the Sociology of Education," in Hamza Alavi (ed), *Introduction to the Sociology of Developing Societies* (London: Palgrave, 1982) 408.
[71] GM Sadiq, *Our Educational Policy: Government of Jammu and Kashmir (*Jammu: Ranbir Press, 1955).

primary schooling, a majority of students went on to trade or technical schools. These "multipurpose" schools at the secondary stage allowed students to learn trades like agriculture, animal husbandry, bee keeping, arts, crafts, sericulture, horticulture, technical skills, and forestry. Learning a particular trade improved a student's chance to obtain employment after completing their schooling. The aim was not just to produce:

> a skilled craftsmen but an educated citizen also…the language of the student would be perfected so that he would understand clearly the orders and instructions given to him….Simple English would be introduced at this stage so that in the end he could read and understand trade journals. The knowledge of history and geography [and economics] of the trainees would be improved….He would be taught to take interest in art and music and drama so that he could pass his leisure hours in a civilized and pleasant manner."[72]

The upliftment that the government envisioned was for the working, trade, and agricultural classes. They were meant to benefit from these changes, gain a healthier civic and social sense, develop an appreciation for culture, and do their part in bringing about a progressive, modernizing Kashmir.

The Kashmiri government was also keen on developing a sense of patriotism for the motherland—which in this case was seen as Kashmir—and pride in the Naya Kashmir program. Attention was paid to the cultivation of a proper civic sense, and explaining the different components and concerns of the modern state. History and geography lessons were devoted to understanding the five-year plans, land reforms, cooperative societies, modern methods of agriculture, rural reconstruction, scientific inventions, women's empowerment, trade unions, industrialization, the postal system, health system, and village economies.[73]

Those students who were qualified went on to secondary (high) schools where they prepared for the matriculation exam. Secondary education at this point was limited to a select

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[72] Sadiq, *Our Educational Policy,* 12-13.
[73] File 1828, nil/1953, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

few. The students specialized in streams that depended on the needs of the locality and on the availability of teachers.[74] After matriculation, a majority of students would end their formal education and find employment in trade, commerce, and government and secretariat jobs. A small number of matriculates were able to go on to colleges and universities whether within Kashmir or outside of the state. Many of them received scholarships so that they could return to Kashmir and teach in the colleges. Others returned as doctors, engineers, lawyers, and bureaucrats.

The government was concerned with the deterioration of discipline and good behavior amongst the youth. In particular, it wanted to ensure that the youth utilized their time in healthy, non-political directions.[75] A significant portion of the education budget was reserved for "youth welfare." As in Nehruvian India, schools and colleges became much more attentive to sports and physical education and the encouragement of art, music, drama, and theater. [76] The Kashmiri government took a keen interest in a number of these schemes sponsored by the Government of India. A look at *Lalla Rookh*, the magazine of Amar Singh College, provides a glimpse into student life at the time, especially in terms of the local colleges. Many students wrote articles about their experiences with hiking, youth camps, and scouting, which were seen as activities that promoted self-confidence, cooperation, better judgment and communal harmony.[77]

Bakshi built a number of sports fields, including the still-standing Bakshi Stadium, and students were urged to participate in competitions and tournaments that were organized by the government. In order to develop a healthier civic and social sense, students were also encouraged

[74] Sadiq, *Our Educational Policy,* 14.
[75] File 359 Edu-490/C/54/26-3-55, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[76] File 1538 441-B/58/1959, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[77] *Lala Rookh*, Amar Singh College Magazine, Srinagar, 1955.

to volunteer and participate in social service activities.[78] The arts also received due attention. Under the auspices of the Tagore Memorial Committee, Bakshi inaugurated the Tagore Hall in 1961. It was the first state-of-the-art theater in Kashmir. Performances were also held in colleges and schools. Artists and troupes from throughout India were invited to perform, and local groups would also perform in the presence of Indian and foreign dignitaries. Kashmiri writers wrote many of the dramas, which promoted communal harmony, raised awareness of women's and social issues, and propagated principles of the new government (including plays on land reform) and the duties and responsibilities of citizens.

Focus on women's education also defined this period. Describing her first day at the Women's College in Srinagar, Shamla Mufti, one of the first women to receive her Master's in Kashmir and a former principal of the Women's College, says that:

> the college was an awesome building, beautiful gardens, magnificent chinar….I saw many girls walking, running here and there. They were all dressed in clean and smart uniforms. Some girls had a hockey stick in their hands…some were talking about badminton matches. Some went towards the field to play netball. Some girls were coming from the classroom. Some were in a hurry to go to the library. Some had to go to a drama practice and they were running around for that reason.[79]

Shamla's description highlights the variety of options available to female students. Not only were they exorted to focus on their studies, but they were also involved in a variety of sports and theater. The students at the women's college would also go with their professors to nearby villages or downtown Srinagar for various social service projects. Shamla describes that:

> In a week they would free up two hours to go from house to house in the village. They would bathe the kids, clean the houses, they would pick up garbage from the courtyards, they would give the people in the village lessons on health and cleaning, they would let the women know about how to take care of their health and let the mothers know how to

[78] *Lala Rookh,* 1955.
[79] Shamla Mufti, *Chilman se Chaman,* 119.

> keep their children away from different sicknesses. In addition to this, they would tell them the importance of keeping women educated.[80]

These extracurricular activities played an important role in the government's cultivation of a modern subject. They propagated the emphasis on discipline, service, and a well-rounded personality. All of these qualities were to help students play a critical role in the Naya Kashmir period. By transforming the mentalities of the students, the government envisioned that they would be able to make their inroads into the broader Kashmiri society, as the students would be able to influence their families, relatives, and neighbors.

To cultivate a well-rounded individual, the government was also interested in exposing students and teachers to views, people, and institutions outside of Kashmir. Because of the paucity of well-qualified teachers, the government placed an importance on training teachers and school administrators and recruited a number of Kashmiri men and women to go on for higher education so that they could later return and teach in government schools. Shamla was a beneficiary of one of these programs, and was one of the first Kashmiri Muslim women to receive her Masters from Aligarh. Others went for medical, law, or engineering training in other cities – Amritsar, Banglore, Bombay, Madras, and Lucknow. Delegations from India consisting of political leaders (including Indira Gandhi), journalists, professors, teachers and students would be invited to visit the educational institutions of the state, where they would interact with the students and be treated to shows and performances exhibiting Kashmiri culture and heritage.[81] It also appears that during Bakshi's time, Kashmir became better connected with a number of Indian states through educational tours and trips. Kashmiri students were sent on tours to cities like Delhi, Amritsar, Agra and Aligarh through their colleges and through athletic competitions, youth camps, and cultural programs in theater and music.

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[80] Shamla Mufti, *Chilman se Chaman,* 196.
[81] File 524 Edu-248.C.54/4.6.54, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

In accordance with the Naya Kashmir manifesto, the state was also interested in cultivating a secular Kashmiri identity, what many have referred to as *kashmiriyat,* or a shared, secular syncretic Kashmiri culture. Interestingly, while the manifesto called for the encouragement of our "common culture, which includes the culture of all nationalities living in the state," it does not itself reference the term *kashmiriyat.*[82] It appears that the term gained traction under Sheikh Abdullah's government, who "devoted much time and resources o the propagation of its mantra."[83] However, the shift from the Muslim Conference to the National Conference—the latter appearing to represent all communities in the state, informed the ways in which *kashmiriyat* was soon to be deployed. Yet, as Chitrelekha Zutshi has argued, even as the National Conference came into being "the discourse on common citizenship had not been successful in eliding over the more entrenched idea of rights on the basis of religious enumeration."[84] This was a tension, as we will see below, that continued well into the early postcolonial period.

The concept of *kashmiriyat* has been discussed by a number of scholars, in regards to the multiple meanings of the term, its origins, and its varying political trajectories.[85] Here, I am interested in examining the actual ways in which the state government attempted to construct this secular, composite identity. To be sure, secularism in the context of the Indian subcontinent was distinct from its European variant. Rajeev Bhargava argues for a "contextual secularism" in the

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[82] *New Kashmir*, 40.

[83] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, 318.

[84] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, 257.

[85] For more on the debates over *Kashmiriyat* see Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*; T. N. Madan "Kashmir, Kashmiris, Kashmiriyat: An Introductory Essay." In *Aparna Rao, The Valley of Kashmir: The Making and Unmaking of a Composite Culture* (Delhi: Manohar, 2008); Balraj Puri "Kashmiriyat: The vitality of Kashmiri identity." *Contemporary South Asia* 4.1, (1995); Sandeep Bamzai. *Bonfire of Kashmiriyat: Deconstructing the Accession* (New Delhi: Rupa & Company, 2006); Rattan Lal Hangloo, "Kashmiriyat: The Voice of the Past Misconstrued," in Naya Ali Khan (ed) *The Parchment of Kashmir: History, Society and Polity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Toru Tak, "The Term Kashmiriyat." *Economic & Political Weekly* 48.16 (2013); Chitralekha Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging;* Nyla Ali Khan, *Parchment of Kashmir* and *Islam, Women, and Violence in Kashmir: Between India and Pakistan,* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

case of India, which "did not erect a strict wall of separation, but proposes instead a 'principled distance' between religion and state. Moreover, by balancing the claims of individuals and religious communities, it never intended a bludgeoning privatization of religion."[86] As we will see in the case of Kashmir, the attempt was not to completely remove religion from the public sphere, but to ensure that due attention was given to the claims of the various religious communities.

Mridu Rai describes the post-Partition period as being the hey-dey of the notion of *Kashmiriyat*, which used selected cultural fragments of an imagined past to draw in both Pandits and Muslims.[87] She argues that it was done to keep the government in Delhi at bay so that it would not encroach upon Kashmir's autonomy. Rai states that the "homogenizing Indian nation's version of accommodating difference had become synonomous with the command issued to alternative identities that they erase themselves."[88] As a result, "an excessive display of Muslim-ness among Kashmiris would provide Delhi's politicians with the excuse to intervene in order to defend the integrity of secular nationalist India."[89] While this is a possible explanation, there were additional internal compulsions for the state. I suggest that the promotion of *kashmiriyat* by the state government was for two main reasons. One, the state government had to bring Kashmir in line with the purported secular ideals of the Government of India and away from the two-nation policy upheld by the creation of Pakistan. Two, and perhaps more importantly, keeping in mind the reasons why Kashmiri nationalism adopted a secular framework in this time, the state government wanted to *preempt* potential discord between religious communities within the state.

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[86]Rajeev Bhargava, "The distinctiveness of Indian secularism," in T.N. Srinivasan (ed) *The Future of Secularism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007) 20-53.
[87] Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects,* 285.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.

Despite the lack of violence between Muslims and Hindus during Partition in the Valley in 1947, the government was careful to ensure that communal sentiments did not emerge within Kashmir as that would entail that the political ideology of the National Conference and it's alliance with the Government of India was at risk.[90] Indeed, the specter of communalism was never too far from the minds of the leadership, both under Sheikh Abdullah and Bakshi. We have seen earlier in this chapter how the National Conference leadership tried to shut down attempts to create a "Muslim block" at the Sri Pratap College, and were wary of the popularity of the Muslim Conference or other pro-Pakistan groups within the state. The government envisioned educational institutes as one place where they could intervene in order to promote communal harmony. The political leadership repeatedly encouraged the education department to "ban the scourge of communalism."[91]

The strengthening of communal harmony was a concern of the Government of India as well, which had urged the various states to take it into consideration when drafting educational schemes. The Director of Education, Asadullah Kazmi, collected the suggestions. These included joint celebrations of all festivals by the various communities, suitable songs to promote communal harmony, inter communal dinners, common prayers and singing of the national anthem by the whole school before work began, games that enabled mutual dependency between members of all communities, the staging of dramas that emphasized communal harmony, the promotion of voluntary social work in diverse communities, studying the language and literature of the other community, and going on hiking trips and excursions together where the students

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[90] As Christopher Snedden describes, this violence occurred mostly in Jammu. Christopher Snedden, *The Untold Story of the People of Azad Kashmir* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2011).
[91] "Communal harmony in educational institutions: steps to be taken to promote it," File 102 Edu-336/50.1.5.50, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

lived together in common tents and dine in common areas.[92] Examples of possible dramas included the life stories of Akbar, Kabir and other "secular" figures of Indian history. The history syllabi were to be expunged of portions that discussed moments of communal violence or tensions, and it was suggested that classrooms be decorated with images of great men and reformers who had done their part in maintaining communal relations.[93] One of the stranger suggestions was to keep teachers busy during the day so they would not have time to get involved in talk that exacerbated religious tensions. The occurrence of such talk must have been a concern of the department as on an educational tour in 1958, the new Minister of State for Health and Education, A.G. Trali, urged teachers to play their role in the democratic movement of the state and:

> Make obligatory upon the teachers to be above board and not to [involve] themselves into any political group or groupings…the profession of the teacher as also that of a doctor is a noble profession. The teacher has to serve all children of all religious or political ideologies equally well and therefore it is necessary that the teacher himself does not belong to any particular political ideology.[94]

The department was also concerned about the types of books, newspapers and magazines that were available in the schools and colleges. Any book, paper or magazine that was deemed to cause religious friction was banned from educational institutes.[95] An incident arose when an unknowing principal of a school ordered a number of books by Maulana Abu Ala Mawdudi, the founder of the Jamaat-i-Islam, an Islamic political organization that advocated a role for Islam in the state, for his school library. The department admonished him for keeping these books in the

[92] File 995, H-20-8-54, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid.

library as they held views that were subversive to the ideals of the state and they were removed.[96] Any works that mocked Islam, Hinduism, or Sikhism were also banned.

Many of the suggestions made to promote communal harmony also overlapped with efforts to make Kashmiris “modern,” such as promoting activities like sporting competitions, excursions and dramas. This overlap is not coincidental. It shows the ways in which the quest for modernity was linked to the need for political stability. In cultivating a particular modern and secular subject, the government tried to ensure that empowerment would result in acceptance of its rule and ideology, and as a result, there would be increased political stability.

In addition to steps taken to promote communal harmony in educational spaces, the department also took a deep interest in rewriting the history syllabi and publishing new textbooks that brought education in line with the ideals of Naya Kashmir. In detailed directions to the writers of textbooks, the Text Book committee instructed, “books are to popularize the ideals of patriotism, tolerance, humanity and encourage a progressive outlook on life in the New Kashmir. Children should be introduced to the cultural heritage of Kashmir in such a manner that they may learn to acquire creative appreciations of this heritage.”[97] Under Sheikh Abdullah, there was more of an emphasis on the history and heritage of Kashmir over that of India, except to mention the impact of the Indian freedom movement on that of Kashmir’s.[98] Writers were encouraged to link history and geography lessons to local events.[99] This slowly began to change under Bakshi’s government, as more explicit mention was made of India and the historical ties between India and Kashmir.

[96] Ibid.
[97] File 771 77/1949, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid.

Two prominent themes emerge in discussions of the refashioning of Kashmiri history. One, the writers of the textbooks were urged to focus on the medieval and modern era of Kashmir, as these eras were seen as best speaking to the secular demands of the contemporary moment.[100] In so doing, the life histories of prominent secular figures such as the famous medieval poet and poetess, Lal Ded and Nund Rishi, and one of the more popular and inclusive Muslim rulers, Zain ul Abidin were highlighted.[101] Other figures like Laladitya, Kashap Reshi, Yusuf Shah Chak, Habba Khatoon, Shah-i-Hamdan, Kalhana, Awantiwarman, were taught. More recent individuals like Maqbool Sherwani and Brigadier Usman, both of whom were supporters of the National Conference and had been killed in battle against the tribals from northwest Pakistan in 1947, were also mentioned in order to shed light on the Kashmiri freedom struggle. Study of the modern period covered the harsh conditions of Kashmiris under the Dogras, and the momentous struggles of the National Conference leadership, which had overcome the scourge of communalism (i.e. the Muslim Conference) during the freedom movement in Kashmir. Both the medieval and the modern period provided ample examples of the "inherent" secular identity of Kashmir, and were thus highlighted by the government.

Second, while the construction of the history of Kashmir focused primarily on an agreed understanding of a nostalgic and romanticized medieval period, the discussion of the historical relationship between Kashmir and India was not as clear-cut. A few years into the post-Partition period, as the state's political status became firmly entrenched with India, more attention was given to covering Indian history. Some drafts of the state governments syllabi and textbooks were returned to the authors for not including material on Indian history or providing stories of important Indian nationalist figures such as the Rani of Jhansi, Gandhi and Nehru. Greater

[100] Ibid.
[101] For a discussion of the nationalist appropriations of Lal Ded and Nund Rishi, Chitrelekha Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging, Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir (*New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) 319

emphasis was placed on Kashmir's historic links with India, especially after Akbar.[102] This was done to trace a natural progression of Kashmir's political future with India. It is important to note that while periodization of Kashmiri history went from periods of Kashmiri rule (whether Buddhist, Hindu or Muslim) to non-Kashmiri rule, Indian history was demarcated along a religious periodization where there were distinct periods of Muslim and Hindu rule. Because the state wanted to ensure that this reading of history did not cause any conflict, professors were called in from Delhi to confirm that the positions of the two religious communities in Indian history were represented fairly.[103] Furthermore, the links between the freedom movement in India and the freedom movement in Kashmir were developed and an emphasis was placed on their shared anti-feudal, progressive, and secular visions. Nonetheless, in the framing of the relationship, Kashmir was already treated as being separate from India – and in the construction of these syllabi, a justification was being made for how they became intertwined.

Yet, not everyone agreed with the version of history that was being shaped, highlighting the contestations that marked the construction of a Kashmiri history that was also supposed to give credence to Kashmir's ties with India. In a response note to a prospective textbook, M.A. Beg, who went on to form the oppositional Plebiscite Front, critiqued the presentation of Kashmir's history with India, saying that it was presented in a manner that made Kashmir seem as if it had always relied on India historically. Beg also questioned the popular Hindu myth of Kashmir's founding and the role of Kashyap Rishi, a Vedic sage of Hinduism. In the Puranas, he is said to have drained the Kashmir Valley to make it inhabitable, after which the term "Kashmir" was derived from his name. Beg stated that this story was a myth but was presented as a fact. He dismissed the notion that the Mughals were liberators, and said that Kashmiri kings

[102] File 1017 200/T/1953, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[103] Ibid.

were presented in a haphazard manner, and if they were Muslims, almost always being discussed in a bad light.[104] Beg was a close associate of Sheikh Abdullah's, and thus, served as a potent foil to the post-Sheikh Naya Kashmir that Bakshi was attempting to build. Beg's criticism of how the state represented Kashmir's history—and seemed to elide over, in particular, it's Muslim history—suggests that the curriculum was viewed by some Muslims as not being as secular as it claimed to be in some circles, and was attempting to pacify other communities in the state. Furthermore, it was not just Islamic religious associations like the Jamaat-i-Islam that accused the state of erasing Kashmir's "Muslim" identity—criticism also came from former members within the National Conference.

The work of constructing a secular identity for Kashmir was not just limited to syllabi and textbooks. The activities of the Archeology and Museums and Research and Publication department also worked towards this end. In doing so, the department departed from the role it had played under the Dogras which, as Mridu Rai discusses, sought to buttress Hindu religious sites and interests.[105] Under Bakshi, the department was now tasked with promoting the ideology of a secular Kashmiri material and literary history. In regards to archeology, the state assembled a list of historic sites that were important to both Hindus and Muslims, providing funding for their preservation and upkeep.[106] The research and publications department also made sure to collect manuscripts throughout the Valley that dealt with both Hindu and Muslim thought, practice and philosophy. The department collected a number of texts in both Sanksrit and Arabic/Persian and published works on Kashmir's contribution to Persian and Sanskrit

[104] Ibid.
[105] Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects,* 192-224.
[106] "Research and Publication Department Correspondence," File 72, Edu-524-D/30.6.51, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

literature.[107] By publishing and preserving these manuscripts, especially those that dealt with mysticism and shaivaism, the state was able to position itself as promoting the secular ideals of Naya Kashmir.[108]

The modernizing aims of the educational system were also intended to contribute to the secular ideals of Naya Kashmir. As we have seen, the government placed emphasis on technical and vocational training for Kashmir's students. In addition, it provided opportunities to a select few to receive higher education in medicine, engineering, and law so that they could serve in the state's institutions upon the completion of their education. It also focused on developing a well-rounded student, one that excelled in sports, the arts, and service. Concurrently, through the curriculum and extracurricular activities of the schools, the Education Department promoted secular ideals and communal harmony, and attempted to limit other ideologies that could gain political currency within the schools. However, the government's efforts to build a modern Kashmir were overshadowed by controversies over its purported secular credentials—criticism that came from both Muslim and Pandit groups.

Kashmiri, Hindi, or Urdu? Linguistic Policy in Naya Kashmir

Despite the efforts made by the makers of Naya Kashmir to bring Kashmir into line with modern, progressive secular educational values, the project suffered from a number of setbacks. The leadership was unable to move beyond the long-lasting effects of the policies of the Dogras that had contributed to Pandit-Muslim tensions, and as a result, became mired in accusations of promoting communalism. Because of the accommodations made for Kashmiri Muslims, many Pandits accused the Muslim-led bureaucracy of promoting a Muslim agenda and seeking to

[107] Ibid.
[108] "Compilation of a Publication for 3 Years Period of Present Popular Government Ending October 1950," File 91, A/836/50, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

Islamize Kashmiri society.[109] On the other hand, because of the erasure of autonomy and closer ties with the Government of India, Kashmiri Muslims accused the state of Indianization and erasing Kashmir's Muslim identity. Given the attempts of the state to construct a secular identity for Kashmir, as well as the distancing of reliance on explicitly Islamic identifiers, the notion of an Islamized bureaucracy in the early postcolonial Kashmiri state appears implausible. Nonetheless, it was a view held by a number of Pandits. The next two sections will delve into the unintended consequences of government policies: fraught relations between Kashmiri Muslims and Pandits. I highlight the role played by the educational policies of the government in unintentionally sharpening these tensions.

This section brings together the state government's internal contestations with an analysis of its linguistic policy. As it did under the Dogras in the 1930s and 1940s, language was a major area where tension was experienced repeatedly within the bureaucracy, and in schools and colleges. The position of Kashmiri, Urdu, and Hindi was hotly contested and became linked to the broader political status of the state. As mentioned above, the official language of instruction under the Dogras was Urdu, in both Perso-Arabic and Devnagri scripts, but a number of Hindu organizations felt that the Devnagri script was being sidelined. After the Dogras, Sheikh Abdullah's government made efforts to promote Kashmiri. The status of Kashmiri in the first few years of Bakshi's rule was unclear, with the government sometimes declaring Kashmiri as the medium of instruction in primary schools, other times Urdu, and sometimes declaring that Hindustani was the official language of the state in both scripts, other times Urdu.[110]

The Government of India was particularly interested in the status of Hindi in the various states, and sent repeated requests to ask the state governments what was being done for the

[109] Mohan Lal Koul, *Kashmir Past and Present: Unravelling the Mystique* (New Delhi: Sehyog Prakashan, 1994).
[110] File 1462 685-A/51/1958, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

propagation of Hindi, as it was one of the national languages. Initially, Asadullah Kazmi, the Director of Education, responded that nothing was being done. After repeated requests from the Government of India, in February 1954, Kazmi reported that:

> Hindi in Devnagri script [has been] given almost the same status as Urdu which is and has been the court language of the state for over two decades, except in those regions where the native tongue of the child has been introduced as the medium. Hindustani in both the scripts is the medium of instruction in the primary and middle stages of education. In the high school, no language is compulsory, but Hindi is one of the three languages, which can be taken up as an option subject. Special attention is being given to making Hindi popular but considering the peculiar linguistic position of the state and other factors- political and social connected with this problem- it has not been an easy task.[111]

It is important to note that Kazmi referred to the official language as Hindustani in his correspondence with the Indian authorities and not Urdu, although the latter was the official policy of the government. It may be that he was attempting to appease the Government of India, by situating Hindustani as the middle ground between Hindi and Urdu. The state government was aware that propagating Hindi to the extent desired by the Government of India would have negative repercussions in Kashmir, so they resisted its broader implementation in the region. Even so, Hindi was an optional subject in the secondary and higher educational stages and an elective at the college level. A number of schools were given aid to promote Hindi teaching. Schools were also encouraged to purchase subscriptions to Hindi magazines, books and journals and a number of the magazines brought out by the educational institutions had Hindi sections in them. The ambiguities in the policies did not just pertain to Hindi, but also to Urdu and Kashmiri. While the official policy rendered it obligatory for teachers to learn both the Devanagari and Perso-Arabic scripts, it remains unclear to what extent this was enforced, or if it was only enforced in those areas where there were significant numbers of students who used

[111] "Propagation of Development of Hindi in the States," File number 192- 442-C-54/27.1.54, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

both.[112] There was also ambiguity about the use of a script for Kashmiri; in some instances the department mentions that the script was complete and was waiting for government authorization and in others it mentions that the script was not yet complete.[113] In 1954, however, the committee submitted its report declaring that a majority of the committee members had ruled in favor of the Perso-Arabic script over Devanagari and Roman. The matter, however, was not further developed.

Within a few years of Bakshi's rule, Urdu was singled out as the primary language of instruction, while efforts to propagate Hindi at the behest of the Government of India continued. Kashmiri was removed from educational institutions, and replaced by Urdu even as a medium of instruction for primary schools, a development that went against the Naya Kashmir manifesto. Kashmiri was spoken by nearly ninety-seven percent of the population in the Valley, while Dogri, Pahari, and Ladakhi were spoken in the other regions of the state. Urdu was not the mother tongue of any of the regions of the state, and so the decision to single it out as the primary language of instruction was a surprising one. One of the reasons provided in contemporary political discourse for the decline of Kashmiri under Bakshi is that it was a deliberate attempt by the state government, under orders from the Government of India, to "Indianize" Kashmir in the post-1953 moment; if the masses remained distant from the Kashmiri language, feelings of a distinct Kashmiri socio-cultural identity would erode, and people would be better able to assimilate with India. This perspective, while plausible, does not provide the entire picture. In the Srinagar State Archives, there are no official directives or correspondence with the Government of India to remove ties to the Kashmiri language—the directives mostly

[112] File 1172 958-C/55/1955, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[113] File 1257 407/T/1956, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives; File 918 Edu-B-836-55/1955, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

concern the propagation of Hindi.[114] In addition, even though Urdu remained one of the regional languages of India, the Government of India was not interested in its promotion. It was increasingly seen as the language of Muslims/Muslim "separatism," since it had been declared the official language of the state of Pakistan. Because of the country's vast diversity, the Government of India was forced to institutionalize a three-language formula in the federal linguistic jurisdiction for each state. The formula, which was intended to contribute to "ethno-linguistic emancipation"—included Hindi, English, and the regional language of each state.[115] In addition, as we will see in the next chapter, the Government of India and the local state attempt to appropriate, not dismiss, Kashmiri for their own purposes. Furthermore, while Kashmiri was being demoted in the educational institutions, it was not being ignored completely. The Education Department began a Kashmiri research section in the new Research and Publications department and began to collect rare Kashmiri manuscripts in order to preserve Kashmiri heritage. Lalla Rukh, a publishing company affiliated with the government, also began to publish a number of contemporary and historical Kashmiri plays, novels, and collections of short stories.[116] Nonetheless, the state government decided not to give Kashmiri official language status in the three-language policy throughout the country. If the issue was not with the Kashmiri language itself, what else led it to be displaced as the medium of instruction? As I contend, the decision to declare Urdu the official language of the state was an entirely *local* one, based on the internal dynamics and agentive role of the Kashmir state.

[114] There is a possibility that this correspondence would be at the National Archives of India—however, because of the inability to access any correspondence pertaining to Kashmir after 1924, one is limited in trying to understand the policies of the Indian state.
[115] Tristen James Mabry, "Speaking to the Nation," in *Nationalism, Language and Muslim Exceptionalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015) 150.
[116] File 1261 410/5/1956, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

Scholars have understood the undermining of Kashmiri in a number of ways. K. Warikoo, a professor of Central Asian Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University makes reference to the variety of ways in which Urdu was given preference over Kashmiri. In addition to being displaced as a medium of instruction, Warikoo argues that there were very few Kashmiri language newspapers. The post-1947 state administration also foiled a number of attempts made to promote the Kashmiri language; for example, when the Films Division of the Government of India wanted to dub films in Kashmiri, the state requested that they do it in simple Urdu, and they also foiled attempts by Russian publishers to translate Russian classics into Kashmiri. Urdu had also overtaken the other regional languages of Jammu and Kashmir state, including Balti, Dogri, Gujari and Ladakhi. Warikoo's explanation represents one perspective on the language issue. He argues that the policy towards Kashmiri reflects the dynamics of "Muslim majoritarianism" in which a religious ethnicity has been superimposed over a linguistic ethnicity. This was done to bring Kashmiri Muslims closer to the concept of the *ummah* and the state of Pakistan. He argues that:

> This task has been carried forward by numerous Islamic political, social and cultural institutions particularly the Jamat-i-Islami, Ahl-e-Hadis, Anjuman Tableegh-i-Islam etc. and the madrassahs or even public schools run by these organistions, all of which have been preaching and promoting Islamic world view both in political, social and cultural affairs. With the result a firm ideological base has been prepared to mould the political and cultural views of Kashmiri Muslims on religious lines rather than ethno-linguistic/cultural basis, thereby negating the indigenous secular and composite cultural heritage.[117]

Warikoo's argument, which may ring true for a number of religious organizations in the Valley, does not help us understand the reason why the Kashmiri *government* promoted Urdu. Further, with its emphasis on "Muslim majoritarianism," it runs the risk of conflating the Kashmiri government, comprised of Kashmiri Muslims, with a number of explicitly Muslim institutions in

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[117] K. Warikoo, "Language and Politics in Jammu and Kashmir: Issues and Perspectives," in P.N. Pushp & K. Warikoo (eds), *Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh: Linguistic Predicament (*Delhi: Har-Anand Publications 1996).

the state. As we have seen, the government attempted to produce a secular space in the educational institutions; for the same bureaucracy and political leadership that arrested people who had pro-Pakistan sentiments to cultivate a language policy based on allegiance to Pakistan is unlikely. Indeed, Kashmiri was being displaced from the educational institutions and replaced by Urdu, but his account of this being a result of Muslim majoritarianism is inadequate.

Even Chitrelekha Zutshi, in her discussion of linguistic policies in the state under Bakshi, states that Urdu was adopted as the only official language of the state as it was "obviously pandering to increasingly vocal elements in Kashmir that were articulating the Kashmiri identity in Muslim terms."[118] Both Warikoo's and Zutshi's reasoning falls into the trap of equating the promotion of Urdu with Muslim majoritarianism, not taking into account the historical position of Urdu in the state, as well as in the Muslim elite imagination. The removal of Kashmiri from the educational system was the result of varying interests – the goals of the Kashmir state, the class-based educational philosophies of those in the Department of Education and, surprisingly, the demands of some individuals in the broader public.

One of the goals of the post-1947 state was to find coherence amongst the different regions, including the Valley, Jammu and Ladakh, and to unify a state identity. In an article entitled "Kashmiri and the Linguistic Predicament of the State", P.N. Pushp argues that:

> It appears that during the fifties the New Kashmir aspirations were dynamic enough to give the Kashmiri language a chance. The language was made at one stroke a subject of study as well as a medium of instruction. But soon the overcautious bureaucracy seems to have had after thoughts. They viewed the experiment as extremely inconvenient, for, despite its constitutional status Kashmiri, after all, was a mother tongue likely to inspire other mother tongues of the State also to press for their claims to be accommodated in the school curriculum. What added to their perturbation was the displacement of Urdu the mother tongues were likely to cause. It was easy for wirepullers to take refuge under the blanket concern for 'national integration.'"[119]

[118] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, 320.
[119] P.N. Pushp, "Kashmiri and the Linguistic Predicament of the State" in P.N. Pushp & K. Warikoo (eds), *Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh: Linguistic Predicament (*Delhi: Har-Anand Publications 1996).

Pushp's suggestion that one of the reasons the bureaucracy found the Kashmiri language to be inconvenient was because it would inspire the other mother tongues (including Dogri, Ladakhi, and Balti) to press for claims to be accommodated seems like a strong possibility, since the state was interested in managing the discontent of the other regions that had erupted in the late Dogra period as well as during Sheikh Abdullah's term, especially with the Praja Parishad in Jammu. Thus, it is possible that Urdu was seen as the language that would unite the various regions of the state.

Yet, this analysis, much like Zutshi's fails to take account of the position of Urdu amongst the Muslim intelligentsia in the subcontinent and the position of Kashmiri in the eyes of many upwardly mobile Kashmiris at this time. For a number of Muslim bureaucrats, Kashmiri was, simply put, not seen as a modern language. Under the Kashmiri Script Writing committee, there were efforts to modernize the Kashmiri language.[120] The committee attempted to meet with Kashmiris of various professions in order to come up with vocabulary that dealt with modern subjects, including topics in health, science and technology. It appears that this effort was more challenging than they could have imagined, given that it was difficult to come up with a modern script, let alone a modern vocabulary. Thus, the government was at a loss to figure out how to modernize Kashmiri, and shifted its attention to Urdu.[121]

Interestingly, it was not just the Muslim educationists that were skeptical about the use of Kashmiri. In the Educational Policy document, G.M. Sadiq, the Education Minister, states that

[120] "Report of the Kashmiri Script Writing Committee", Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[121] In an article on the status of Kashmiri as a majority-minority language, Makhan Tickoo interviews a number of educationists and individuals and asks them about their perceptions of the Kashmiri language. He finds that many of them have poor opinion of the language, and even question if it is a language, given it does not have "grammar rules," and that it borrows heavily from the vocabulary of other languages. Furthermore, Tickoo argues that Kashmiri is seen as an "unproductive language," unlike English, which offers opportunities for upward mobility. See Makhan Tickoo, "When is a Language Worth Teaching? Native Langauges and English in India," *Language, Culture and Curriculum,* 6, (1993) 225-239.

“many Kashmiris, especially those who belong to towns and who are well-off do not want their children to be taught Kashmiri in schools. They seem to feel that Kashmiri should be taught to children at home and the schools should teach them Urdu.”[122] This perspective was not just limited to urban Kashmiris. A number of petitions from Kashmiris living in rural areas also asked the Education Department to focus on teaching Urdu in schools as the children learned Kashmiri at home. In one example, the parents of students who were taught Kashmiri at the primary level reacted strongly against this and urged the local education officer to teach the students exclusively in Urdu.[123] In their eyes, Kashmiri was the language of the rural, village poor. It was seen as backwards.[124]

When it came to the promotion of heritage and literature, Kashmiri was promoted through the preservation of old manuscripts and producing literature in the language, but when it came to the crafting of modern subjects through the education system, it was not deemed the appropriate language for the task. The promotion of Urdu was also linked to the mobile educational aspirations of the Muslim bureaucracy and the middle and lower classes. It would provide greater opportunity for Kashmiri Muslims to travel to places like Aligarh, Delhi or Hyderabad for their studies. Urdu was seen as providing greater status, as well as geographic and intellectual mobility. The desire for Urdu not only highlights the desire for a modern educational experience, but also shows the ways in which people themselves were attempting to shape educational debates.

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[122] Sadiq, *Our Educational Policy,* 9.

[123] File 1257 407/T/1956, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

[124] For a more contemporary study of a “private conflict between different linguistic loyalties and loves” in Kashmir, and the estrangement of Kashmiris from their native language, see Ananya Kabir, “A Language of One’s Own? Linguistic Underrepresentation in the Kashmir Valley,” in Silke Horstkotte and Esther Peeren (eds), *The Shock of the Other: Situating Alterities* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007) 144. Kabir argues that English and Urdu compete with Kashmiri in terms of “affect and prestige” and is “symptomatic of deeper levels of psychic splintering.”

There is a separate, but related reason why Kashmiri was demoted in the educational institutions. The promotion of Kashmiri was seen as a communist conspiracy as most of the leaders of the Democratic National Conference (who had formed a separate group from Bakshi in the mid 1950's) were in favor of it, including Sadiq and Mir Qasim.[125] Therefore, Kashmiri might also have been a site of contention between the Bakshi group and the communists—who had been deeply involved in the writing of the manifesto—in his administration, underlining another example of how local rivalries impacted policy.

The attraction to Urdu was thus linked to the desire for modernity. We must remember that a number of the educationists had obtained their education from Aligarh and were in touch with the developments of the Muslim intelligentsia throughout the subcontinent. Kavita Datla discusses the role that Urdu played for the Muslim intelligentsia affiliated with Osmania University. She argues that the Muslim educationists did not employ Urdu as a tool to articulate their identitarian claims but as grounds to shape the future of a secular, modernizing national culture that also had place for the Muslim past and scholarly traditions.[126] Thus, Urdu was seen as being at the center of a shared secular future.

Datla's argument holds partial resonance for Kashmir, although in the case of Kashmir, the emphasis was more on the class-based aspirations of a group of Kashmiri Muslims instead of the reformulation of Muslim literary and religious traditions. In Kashmir, Urdu had both a historical pull, as it was the language of the state under the Dogras, and also a modern one. Urdu provided the Muslims of Kashmir with an elite language that was also seen as being modern. Urdu was initially important for a number of Pandit educationists as well, as many of them were

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[125] Thank you to Abir Bazaz for pointing me towards this plausible explanation.
[126] Kavita Datla, *The Language of Secular Islam: Urdu Nationalism and Colonial India* (Honolulu: The University of Hawaii Press, 2013).

well versed in the language. Indeed, Pandits had written much of the Urdu literature written by Kashmiris.[127]

A look into language syllabi sheds light on how Urdu was viewed vis-à-vis other languages. The Urdu syllabi encouraged teachers to discuss vocabulary and stories relating to the body, dress, foods, shelter, animals, transport, objects, occupations, the lives of the great men and women of Kashmir, craft, and agriculture. No reference was made to explicitly Islamic topics, such as stories of the Prophets or any Islamic texts or religious traditions.[128] This was not the case for the Hindi and Punjabi language syllabi. While the Hindi and Punjabi language syllabi also dealt with everyday vocabulary relating to the home, school, hygiene, sports, science, patriotism, they also explicitly made reference to religious stories from the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and the Baghvad Gita as well as information on the Guru Nanak and other religious figures.[129] The promotion of Urdu in the early post-colonial Kashmiri state was largely articulated in a deliberately non-religious way. This is unlike Urdu nationalism in Hyderabad, which incorporated Muslim identity to invoke a broader, more universal national identity. Nevertheless, whatever the intentions of the state might have been, a number of Kashmiri Pandits viewed the promotion of Urdu as a "communal" move that favored Kashmiri Muslims over other groups in the state.

Controversies over Educational Policies

Educational contestations surrounding Pandit-Muslim relations did not just pertain to linguistic policy, they also spilled over into college admissions and employment. From the perspective of a number of Pandits, as more and more Muslims began to benefit from the

[127] For more on the emergence of Urdu in Kashmir, see M. Ashraf Bhat, "Emergence of the Urdu Discourses in Kashmir," *Language in India*, 11, 9, (Sept. 2011) 156-168.
[128] "Language Syllabi," Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[129] "Language Syllabi," Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

openings provided by the new government, their community became marginalized. We have already seen that in order to appease Kashmiri Muslims after accession and the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah, Bakshi's government gave employment and educational seats to a number of Muslims whose families had played a role in providing legitimacy for his rule. Bakshi himself affirmed his use of this strategy. After his rule ended, a commission was set up with the support of the Government of India in 1967 to investigate the state's recruitment policies, which were causing tensions between various communities. In its report, the commission declared that "there were instances, where recruitment was made without observing the usual formalities…besides some appointments were also made from political cadres….[Bakshi] stated that merit could not be the only criterion in these matters…[for if it were so] there would be no place for Muslims…and other backward people in the state."[130] Because of the need for Muslim representation in the government and educational institutions, many of these positions were given to Muslims over more "qualified" Pandits. Ironically, this went against the generous ideal of representation that sought to protect the interests of the minorities in the state, as articulated in the Naya Kashmir manifesto. In the plan, minorities were given a weightage in the legislative assembly, in an effort to quell their fears of majoritarianism.

Two incidents occurred under Bakshi's government that highlight these contestations around educational policies. The first was the issuing of a government order in 1954 that established community-based ratios for admissions to the colleges. The second was the hiring of teachers within the state. The Director of Education, Kazmi, provided his justification for establishing community-based ratios:

> I feel that the Muslims in Kashmir cannot for some years compete on equal terms with more educationally advanced non-Muslims for admissions in the colleges. It is therefore,

[130] Government of Jammu and Kashmir. "Report of the Jammu and Kashmir Commission of Inquiry." (December 1968) 74.

> very necessary to give them extra facilities. It is very clear the Muslims on the whole haven't been given special privilege in matter of admissions and the communities other than Muslims are not in any way laboring under disadvantage.[131]

Subsequently, on July 10, 1954, the Secretary to Government, Ministry of Education issued an order declaring that:

> With a view to affording chance for higher education to all communities, it is hereby ordered that future admissions in the colleges should be regulated as under
> Kashmir: Hindus (Including Sikhs): 30%
> Muslims: 70%
> Jammu: Hindus (Including Sikhs): 70%
> Muslims: 30%[132]

Given that Kashmiri Pandits and other non-Muslim students had constituted the vast majority of students in the colleges in Kashmir, this order had significant implications. The order had arisen in response to a number of protests and requests by Kashmiri Muslim students who demanded that Bakshi's government provide better opportunities for Muslims in higher education. In its efforts to ensure that these protests did not take a political turn, the government projected that a better enrollment of Muslims into the colleges would not only help fulfill the modernist goals of Naya Kashmir, but would also lessen the concerns of the Muslim majority towards Indian rule.

In doing so, the government met stiff resistance from the Hindus in Kashmir. Prominent Pandit newspapers, including *Martand* as well as papers outside of Kashmir, criticized this new order vehemently. An article in the *Martand* declared that the "admission into state educational institutions was fixed on a communal basis….if not revoked numerous Hindu boys and girls being unable to secure entrance in government colleges would have either to discontinue their studies or go out of the state which would be possible only for a handful of those with some

[131] File 1006 Edu 249-D/54/1954, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.
[132] Ibid.

means."[133] The article continued that this order not only went against the "letter and spirit of the Indian constitution but also serves to reveal the true nature of the claims being made by state leaders that they stand for the high principles of secularism and democracy."[134] The government was accused of "dishonest and unscrupulous devices" for achieving their objective, and was likely to be challenged in the court of law.

The reaction of the minority press in the state as well as the Indian press led the Education Department to go on the defensive.[135] The response of the department is quoted here at length. The department acknowledged that:

> not a single voice has been raised in support of this order. The intention of the government is not to ban admission of boys and girls of any particular community but to enable boys belonging to backward classes to get admission in state colleges freely. The government has been spending the major portion of its revenues to impart free education and there it would be absolutely tendentious to suppose that there is any attempt to discourage higher education in case of the more educationally advanced communities. The policies of the government with respect to every sphere of administration are secular and the government is anxious to disallow discrimination against any community or class of people on grounds of religion….In spite of the order, there have been no instances in which admission has been refused to the non-Muslim boys in Kashmir and Muslim boys in Jammu.[136]

The minority media in the state, saying that non-Muslims were unable to secure admission within the limits of the quota reserved for them, however, disputed the latter point. Nonetheless, the department was urged to issue a clarifying directive that stated that admission to the colleges would be primarily based on merit and backwardness of a particular community would be a secondary consideration.

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[133] Ibid.
[134] Ibid.
[135] There is also some reference made in the files held at the Srinagar State Archives about discussions with the Ministry of Home of the Government of India on the admissions issue. However, because access to Indian government files on Kashmir is restricted, it becomes difficult to ascertain what the position of the Government of India was on this issue.
[136] File 1006, Department of Education, Srinagar State Archives.

A number of leading Pandits in the Department of Education including the Education Minister, J.N. Bhan, were in support of this government policy. Nonetheless, in contrast to the period under Dogra rule where Muslim students felt marginalized within colleges, criticism now came from certain segments of the Kashmiri Pandit community, who felt that the bureaucracy, that now had a significant number of Muslims, was deliberately trying to appease Kashmiri Muslims at Pandit expense.[137] These Pandits viewed the Muslims as taking greater control over the bureaucracy; more and more Muslims were entering the state services, being hired as teachers and being sent outside of Kashmir for training and further education. To be sure, Mridu Rai has discussed how this process already had begun under the Dogras, as the colonial state had forced the Dogras to make certain concessions to the Muslim community. As Rai argues for the 1940s, "confronted for the first time with an assertive Muslim population mobilizing for a share of the same pie, the comfortable adherence by the Pandits…evaporated and they began to speak increasingly in the language of an endangered religious minority."[138] This sense of being an "endangered religious minority," only heightened in the early post-Partition period, and especially as Muslims began to dominate in the bureaucracy and in the educational institutions.

Evidence of this can be seen in Agha Ashraf's memoirs. Agha Ashraf wrote of the complex relations between Kashmiri Muslims and Pandits during Bakshi's rule. As one of the first Kashmiri Muslims to play a prominent role in the Education Department, he narrates his close friendships and relationships with a number of Pandit friends and mentors, whom he thanks profusely for their impact on him. At the same time, he describes the oppression meted out by the Pandits who were in government service or in the rural elite against Muslims under the

[137] The land reforms under Sheikh Abdullah's government also raised substantial criticism from the Hindu community, as a majority of the landlords who lost land were Hindu and the tillers who gained the land were Muslim. See Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 283.
[138] Rai, *Muslim Rulers, Hindu Subjects*, 257.

Dogras.[139] He observes that the social position of Pandits declined during Bakshi's government. He claims that the communities at the time saw themselves as two separate nations, and the Pandits began to distance themselves from the aspirations of Kashmiri Muslims and became closer to the central government.[140] In the educational institutions, he describes the Pandit *baradari* (brotherhood) as being closely linked, never speaking ill against each other and rejecting interference in their community's internal affairs. He also acknowledges the terror and fear the community felt once their monopoly on education and employment began to unravel. One of the major incidents that Agha Ashraf raises in his memoir is the reaction of the Pandit community towards the hiring of Kashmiri Muslim teachers. As Principal of the Teachers College, Agha Ashraf oversaw a majority of Pandit teachers. As more Muslim teachers were hired into the college, he states that the Pandit teachers were not happy to receive them.[141] At one point, when he sends two Muslim women for higher training, he describes how the Pandits started a corruption case against him, claiming he was acting "communally" and discriminating against Kashmiri Pandits. The issue was raised with Bakshi himself, who heard Agha Ashraf's reasoning, and the complaint was eventually dismissed. Nonetheless, Agha Ashraf's name was tarnished and he declares that those Pandits whom he had tried to help were the first people to have turned against him. He states that everything he had worked for (secularism, communal harmony) had been destroyed.[142]

For a number of Pandits, especially those involved with educational affairs, fostering Muslim interests had reached its apogee under Bakshi. Professor Mohan Lal Koul, who served

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[139] Ali, *Kuch to Likhye,* 108.
[140] Ali, *Kuch to Likhye,* 112.
[141] Ali, *Kuch to Likhye*, 117.
[142] Ali, *Kuch to Likhye,* 125.

in a number of colleges in the state, wrote about his firsthand experience of events in Kashmir after 1947. He argues that:

> All corners in the Valley were rummaged for Muslim graduates, who were put to the Training College, Srinagar for the Diploma in Teaching and soon after the completion of the course were directly installed as Headmasters over-riding the merit, achievements and claims of the veteran Kashmirian Hindu teachers, waiting in the wings for a push-up, a promotion. The processes of supersession started by Sheikh Abdullah touched a new high in Bakshi's tenure generating a simmering discontent in the Kashmirian Hindu teachers and Hindu employees in all departments of the government.[143]

Koul's reflections are representative of the general sentiments of a number of Kashmiri Pandit educationists, many of whom believed they were being discriminated against in hiring practices. This is further evidenced by a number of Pandit teachers who went to the state high court with a charge against the Education Department. For doing so, Koul accuses Bakshi's men of harassing them. He says that, "the goon-brigade reared and raised by Bakshi led an operation against the prominent Hindu teachers…putting them to a great humiliation…Prime Minister [has] stooped so low for organising such an operation against the veteran Hindu teachers, who were instrumental in changing the educational scenario of the state."[144] Justice Bahauddin ran the state high court at the time. The primary issue that was raised at the court was whether the hiring and promotions of new and existing teachers would be based on seniority (which would benefit the Pandits) or educational ability (a phrase that was flexible enough to benefit Muslims). A lengthy debate ensued over the definition of backwardness—whether it entailed social or economic backwardness. Eventually, the plea of the Pandits was overruled in favor of backwardness.

The issue was again raised in the Supreme Court of India in 1968, during G.M. Sadiq's rule in a prominent case entitled *Trikoni Nath vs. the State of Jammu and Kashmir.* The Supreme

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[143] ML Koul, *Kashmir Past and Present: Unravelling the Mystique*, To be accessed here: http://www.koausa.org/pastpresent/index.html, Date of Access: 10 Feb 2016.
[144] Ibid.

Court, unsatisfied with the designation of the Muslims as a backward class, declared that the current practices of the state were unconstitutional.[145] While the state government upheld the judgment, it devised a plan to continue to allow Muslims to hold their offices as "in-charge" headmasters or educational officers. As a result of this case, Agha Ashraf describes how he was made to put two headmasters in each school –one based on seniority and one based on educational ability – which usually resulted in one Pandit and one Muslim in each school. Debates over the hiring practices of the state and discrimination against the Pandits continued, and a number of further cases were raised during Sadiq's administration. The issue sparked a number of protests and demonstrations from members of both communities against the policies of the state.

Were the Pandits discriminated against in educational policies? The state government's 1967 Commission of Enquiry that was set up to investigate recruitment policies also looked into biases for selection into higher education. Interestingly, it found that the number of students belonging to Jammu was much smaller than those from Kashmir, but that "the share of Hindus has been much larger than that of Muslims in all the important courses of study."[146] Furthermore, the commission declared that Hindu students received a much larger share of study loans than Muslims. While the commission had certainly vindicated the practices of the state government, at least in regards to discrimination against Kashmiri Pandits, it certainly had a political reason to do so. The Commission was motivated in part by a desire to maintain political stability. If it had found the Kashmir government guilty of discrimination against Pandits, it would have caused additional problems for a state that was increasingly struggling to uplift Kashmiri Muslims.

[145] Supreme Court of India, "Triloki Nath and Anr vs State of Jammu and Kashmir and Ors (April 1968), To be accessed here: http://indiankanoon.org/doc/1006376/, Date of Access: 10 Feb 2016.
[146] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Commission of Enquiry," 72.

Whatever the intentions of the government might have been, a number of Kashmiri Pandits perceived it as acting communally. As Zutshi argues, "Many Kashmiri Pandits were not in a mood to be mollified by ideas of a tolerant Kashmiri culture when it seemed to them that the state had done very little to ensure their economic and political rights as a minority."[147]

Conclusion

In August 1967, a few years after Bakshi stepped down from power, Parmeshwari Handoo, a Pandit girl, married Ghulam Rasool Kanth, a Kashmiri Muslim, and converted to Islam. Large numbers of Kashmiri Pandits came out on the streets to launch an agitation against the government and the Muslim community, accusing the Muslim boy of forcibly abducting Handoo.[148] The agitation soon spread and took on a political turn, as Pandits argued that the government, which had decided that Handoo was of major age and had willingly married the Muslim boy, was appeasing Kashmiri Muslims. Kashmiri Muslims also led a number of protests in response, which quickly turned into rallies for self-determination. While the Pandit agitation had been sparked by the immediate incident of the conversion and allegations of forced marriage, it was the backdrop of increasing tensions between the two communities that contributed to the agitation gaining momentum.

This chapter has shown how the educational policies of Bakshi's government attempted to create a modern, secular identity for the state. In doing so, the government attempted to create an even playing field for Kashmir's Muslims, nearly ninety-nine percent of who had remained illiterate under the Dogras. On some level, the government succeeded. Thousands of schools were opened, as well as a number of colleges and technical institutions. As education was made free, the enrollment for boys and girls increased exponentially. A number of Kashmiri Muslims

[147] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging,* 318.
[148] Nagin Bazaz, *Ahead of His Times, Prem Nath Bazaz: His Life and Work* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1983).

were also able to go outside of the state for further education. However, despite the government's efforts to be secular in shaping its modernizing educational policies, the strategic and practical need for the government to cater to Kashmiri Muslims caused religious friction and the government was accused of acting "communally." In its attempts to pursue a secular modernity for Kashmir, the government's implementation of Naya Kashmir ironically results in pitting Pandits against this project. The state's desire to create an equitable society was overshadowed by representational and linguistic policies that increased tensions between Pandits and Muslims. Pandits increasingly felt more insecure and beleaguered as a minority community and many of them began to leave the Valley, in search of better options outside of Kashmir. Muslim identity also became more defined in this moment as its "empowerment" occurred through reference to religion.

I conclude by examining how educational debates allow us to see some of the continuities between the colonial and postcolonial periods in the region, especially in regards to the relationship between religious communities and the state. Although the ideologies of the Dogra government—which used Hinduism to buttress its claims of legitimacy—and the Bakshi government—which used secular goals to buttress its claims of legitimacy—were starkly different, the end result—increased tensions between varying communities—was the same. The reason for this lies in the continued postcolonial recognition of rights based on community identities, which in the case of Kashmir was particularly heightened because of its "disputed status." In other words, the political compulsions of the state government undermined the secular aims of Naya Kashmir, as religious minorities viewed the state government as appeasing Kashmiri Muslims. At the same time, a number of Kashmiri Muslims viewed the same state as erasing Kashmir's "Muslim identity," which, as Yogind Sikander argues, prompted a number of

families to send their children to the schools run by the Jamaat-i-Islam. Naya Kashmir's secular educational project was being shaped not just in a context of India versus Kashmir, but also in the context of local dynamics between Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits, whose boundaries were increasingly being drawn by both the state and civic organizations. While Islamic ideology or teachings were entirely absent from the modern state formation in Kashmir's Muslim-majority context, the state government's recognition of a "Muslim community" as a cohesive and unitary entity that needed to be appeased was itself a modality by which Islam was constitutive of the modernizing state. As a result of the demarcation of differences between Muslims and Pandits, both identified with their own respective religious communities, not more closely with the Kashmir state. In this sense, secularism in this context was not merely about neutrality toward religion, but also about an active constitution of religious difference and a setting of the terms by which religious claims could be articulated in public and inform state policies. More importantly, the primary driver of these reconfigurations was not religious-political institutions, but the state itself.

In this chapter, I have also highlighted the agentive role of Kashmiri elites, middle and lower classes in shaping educational affairs—a development that was in contrast to education under the Dogras. Education went from being in the purview of a select group of Kashmiris to an institution that common Kashmiris could make claims on. This approach allows us to step away from seeing social developments in Kashmir as only being driven by the logic of center-state or India-Pakistan relations. The elites that took part in developing educational policy did so with a keen understanding of the needs of the local state—the need to emphasize a productive citizenry and a secular identity—and *they* decided what this entailed for the state, be it in terms of linguistic policies or educational curricula. Other social groups were able to make demands for

the improvement of education in their communities. This suggests that to an extent Naya Kashmir—a project of state and social reform—had the potential of going beyond political lines, beyond India and Pakistan, as Kashmiris were agentive in taking part and shaping its contours. In the next chapter, we will see how this agency plays out in Bakshi's policies for cultural development.

Chapter Three

Jashn-e-Kashmir: Patronage and the Institutionalization of a Cultural Intelligentsia

Introduction

In 1956, the Jammu and Kashmir Government hosted the first ever *Jashn-e-Kashmir*, or Festival of Kashmir, which was held throughout the region.[149] The festival, which was intended to bring to light many aspects of Kashmiri culture and "serve[d] as a vehicle of contact between Kashmir and the rest of India," showcased theater, music, poetry, dance, sports, and other exhibitions from Kashmir as well as various Indian states.[150] Bollywood film stars performed *qawwalis* and performances in the newly built Bakshi Stadium, while *kathak* performers regaled audiences in Tagore Hall. Performances were arranged throughout Kashmir – in Shopian, Kulgam, Pahalgam, Sopore, and Handwara - as well as in Jammu and Leh. *Bhand pather* and *chakri* performances congregated peasants in rural areas.[151] Not just intended for people in the region, the Festival attracted nearly 20,000 tourists as well as senior leaders from India, including Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.[152] It was the most visible and celebrated embodiment of Naya Kashmir.

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[149] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Publication on the Occasion of the Kashmir Festival," Accession No: 105, in Years: 1955, 101-139, Srinagar State Archives, Jammu and Kashmir, 2-3.
[150] Ibid 3.
[151] *Bhand pather* is a form of folk theater, which traces its roots to the pre-Mughal period in Kashmir. The *bhands* were a troupe of travelling artists that would travel from village to village for their performances. The performances focused on social issues, usually with a satirical bent. *Chakri* is a form of folk music that uses musical instruments like the harmonium, the rubab, the sarangi and the nout. See Javaid Iqbal Bhat, "Loss of a Syncretic Theatrical Form," *Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore*, 34 (2006) 41-42.
[152] "Srinagar Diary" *Kashmir Today*, Volume 1, Number 1(Srinagar: Lalla Rookh Publications, September 1956) 1

In a message to the public at the conclusion of a month-long series of events, Bakshi avowed that the annual Festival was to be a crucial component of Naya Kashmir. "Now that we have earnestly launched schemes for the economic and social regeneration of the people of our state," he declared, "it is necessary that adequate attention should be paid to our cultural heritage so that these traditions are nourished and carried forward."[153] Making reference to the improved standard of living since his government took power, he continued, "progress would be incomplete if, side by side with these material changes, we ignore our cultural needs. The Festival of Kashmir was started with the purpose of directing public attention towards this aspect of our social life."[154] He noted that the celebration would "provide means of greater contact and fraternization between the people of this place and those living in the rest of India."[155] It was also intended as a break from "tension and politics," and holding the Festival was "a fitting climax to the conditions of normalcy and stability that followed the change-over in August 1953."[156]

Jashn-e-Kashmir joined a number of additional cultural developments that were implemented under Bakshi, most importantly culminating in the Jammu and Kashmir Academy for Arts, Culture and Language (Cultural Academy). In many ways, we can see these cultural developments as linked to the Kashmiri state's broader goals at the time, addressed in the previous two chapters and suggested by Bakshi's speech at the end of the Festival. They are: to create legitimacy for its rule, modernize Kashmiri society, promote socialist development and secular ideals, and project normalcy to observers outside Kashmir, which would in turn increase tourism, and foster emotional integration between Kashmir and the Indian Union. Additionally, as I argue in this chapter, the government's interventions in the realm of culture also played a

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[153] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "Message by GM Bakshi," Oct 8th, 1956.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid.
[156] "Srinagar Diary" *Kashmir Today*, Volume 1, Number 1(Srinagar: Lalla Rookh Publications, September 1956) 1.

critical role in encouraging Kashmir's emerging cultural intelligentsia, providing them with the resources and platforms to showcase their work. Furthermore, the government employed elements of Kashmiri tradition and heritage to promote a unique brand of cultural nationalism.

My use of the term "culture" focuses on a narrow set of activities instead of a comprehensive body of knowledge that includes belief, religion, morals, law, custom, as well as art. I am primarily interested in what Edward Said has described as "each society's reservoir of the best that has been known and thought."[157] Seeing this literary and aesthetic form as linked to economic, social, and political realms, I employ the notion of a "cultural politics." As Mehran Kamrava argues, "the connection between politics and culture becomes particularly apparent when we take a macro view of the former: politics is comprised of developments occurring within the state, within society, and between state and society."[158] Culture has an "intimate connection with politics" and is constructed according to reigning political paradigms. As we will see, Bakshi's state building project, influenced by the Naya Kashmir manifesto, sought to incorporate cultural reform.

The intimate relationship between the two—politics and culture—is clear when we understand the government's involvement in cultural affairs in the context of leftist trends in Kashmir and globally at the time. Culture was a site of activity for a number of global political movements in the first half of the twentieth century, many of which were influenced by communist and socialist ideals. In the era of decolonization, cultural producers were compelled to renegotiate their relationship with the postcolonial state, while the latter, especially in a number of African and Asian contexts, attempted to absorb, subvert, or suppress the role of the left. At the same time, the United States launched its Congress for Cultural Freedom, which was

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[157] William Hart, *Edward Said and the Religious Effects of Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 98.
[158] Mehran Kamrava, *Cultural Politics in the Third World* (London: UCL Press, 1999) 14.

an international liberal anti-communist intellectual front.[159] The Congress was mainly active in Western Europe, but it was also present in South Asia, especially in Pakistan, where American influence was increasing as a result of the Cold War.[160] The Congress for Cultural Freedom was less prevalent in India, as its cultural intelligentsia was more influenced by the Soviet Union, so it did not make any inroads into Kashmir. The era of decolonization was, in many ways, an era replete with cultural propaganda and cultural contestations were integral to postcolonial nation-building projects.

This chapter examines how the state government mobilized cultural production and describes how an emerging cultural intelligentsia, including artists, writers, poets, playwrights, and musicians, responded to this mobilization. Not all cultural production in this period was affiliated with the state. A number of artists continued to write poetry on religious, mystical, and philosophical themes and utilized literary conventions that preceded the modern era. Nonetheless, I focus primarily on artists who were mobilized to shape the cultural policies of the Kashmir state. Since Partition, the state government was active in the promotion of a Cultural Front, which consisted of writers, poets, and playwrights tasked with the preservation and promotion of Kashmiri culture and heritage, contributing to a distinct sense of Kashmiri cultural nationalism. While this process began under Sheikh Abdullah, it expanded under Bakshi, who was able to materialize the cultural aims of Naya Kashmir.

At the same time, however, cultural production should not just be seen as an exercise of a hegemonic state. While the state utilized culture for its own aims, cultural producers and

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[159] For more on Cold War cultural politics, see Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: The New Press, 1999); Giles Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture: The Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Political Economy of American Hegemony 1945-1955* (London: Routledge, 2002); Giles Scott-Smith & Hans Krabbendam, *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-1960* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003); Peter Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy: the Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Struggle for the Mind of Postwar Europe* (Free Pr. 1989); Uta G Poiger, *Jazz, rock, and rebels: Cold War politics and American culture in a divided Germany* (Los Angeles: Univ of California Press, 2000).
[160] Saadia Toor, *The State of Islam: Culture and Cold War Politics in Pakistan* (London: Pluto Press, 2011) 86.

receivers were agents themselves, and found ways to rework, resist, and subvert the narratives of the state, as we find in both India and Pakistan.[161] Bearing this in mind, while we will see how the Bakshi government's interventions in cultural affairs were a deliberate attempt to control and consolidate the narratives that were emerging in Naya Kashmir, they were not hegemonic, highlighting how the implementation of the project of cultural reform on the ground was marked by contestation and dissent. This chapter argues that although the cultural intelligentsia in Kashmir was reliant on state patronage, the bureaucratization of culture under Bakshi produced its own contradictions by eliciting *both* conformity and resistance. Crucially, it sheds light on the dynamism that animates state-society relations as it allows us to see Naya Kashmir as a project in making, as local actors interpreted state ideology.

This chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section, I examine the broader cultural landscape in Kashmir before Bakshi's period, including the emergence of the progressive literary movement in the 1940s and its development in the post-Partition context. Through an examination of artist patronage, incorporation of artists into the government bureaucracy, creation of cultural institutions such as Lalla Rookh Publications and the still-standing Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages (also known as the Cultural Academy), and proliferation of government sponsored magazines and journals, the second section explores how, under Bakshi, culture was bureaucratized. The next two sections detail how cultural producers responded to this period. They contribute to the larger aims of the

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[161] In India, the Films Division of India perhaps serves as the best example of this. While Nehru's vision for the documentaries produced by the Films Division was that they would promote the project of modernization and economic development, a number of Indian directors dissented from this project, creating films that challenged the narratives of progress. As Peter Sutoris states, these films highlighted the undercurrents of dissent within the states' development regime. Saadia Toor also references the poetry of Habib Jalib in Pakistan, one of the few dissent leftist poets that wrote against Ayub Khan's regime, in contrast to a number of formerly progressive writers who were co-opted by the state. See Toor, *The State of Islam*, 89; Peter Sutoris, *Visions of Development: Films Division of India and the Imagination of Progress, 1948-75* (London: Hurst Publishers, 2015); Abuja Jain, "The Curious case of the Films Division: Some Annotations on the Beginnings of Indian Documentary Cinema in Postindependence India, 1940s-1960s," *The Velvet Light Trap*, 71 (Spring 2013).

dissertation by amplifying local voices and concerns. In the third section, I show how some writers, including the poet Rehman Rahi, provide us with a sharp critique of Bakshi's Kashmir, serving as a counterpoint to the largely statist narratives of the period. The last section foregrounds an archive of the everyday with a study of fiction. In particular, I focus on the works of a prominent Kashmiri short story writer and novelist, Akthar Mohiuddin. Mohiuddin began his writing career as part of the state's cultural apparatus, and was reliant on state patronage for most of his life. He is credited with publishing the first Kashmiri novel in 1952. As the political situation in the state evolved, Mohiuddin wrote a number of short stories and historical essays that provide us with insight into the daily struggles of ordinary people during a time of purported progress and change. In doing so, his stories help us understand the social and cultural concerns of the writers of this period. This chapter concludes with the contention that the bureaucratization of culture also led to the dissolution of the Kashmir left and that the importance of the state's cultural project was in inadvertently laying the foundation for a Kashmiri cultural nationalism that saw itself as distinct from India.

The Rise of Progressivism in Kashmir

Modern literature in Kashmir emerged during the later half of Dogra rule, and was revitalized in the period surrounding Partition. Prior to this period, literature in Kashmir was primarily comprised of classical religious and literary texts in Persian and Kashmiri, including *marsiyas, naats, ghazals, masnavis*, and a specific medium of Kashmiri poetry called *vaakhs,* popularized by the medieval poet and poetess Shaikh Nur-ud-din (Nund Rishi), and Lal Ded.[162] There was also a vast body of literature in Sanskrit, and to a limited extent, in Arabic. The shift to Urdu occurred in the third and fourth decade of the twentieth century. Two poets who wrote of the suppressed condition of Kashmiris under the Dogras were Ghulam Ahmed Mahjoor (1885-

[162] Trilokinath Raina, *A History of Kashmiri Literature* (New Delhi, Sahitya Akademi, 2002) 36-65.

1952) and Abdul Ahad Azad (1903-1948), both of whom attempted to bring the language of poetry to the language of the common man. Both writers wrote in Urdu, although their most revered works are in Kashmiri. Azad was the more revolutionary of the two; he identified as a Marxist and his poetry directly addressed themes of social change and justice.[163]

Leftist thought, which gained popularity amongst the cultural intelligentsia throughout the subcontinent, also elicited interest in Kashmir. In the 1920s and 1930s, a small number of middle class Kashmiris went to Punjab for their higher education. There, they encountered bustling communist circles that idealized the Russian Revolution.[164] Upon their return to Kashmir, a number of these individuals were to play a critical role in the creation of the National Conference and in the drafting of the Naya Kashmir manifesto. In the 1940s and 1950s, Kashmir became a popular site for leading communist literary figures, including M.D. Taseer, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Mulk Raj Anand, and K.A. Abbas, many of whom were close friends with Sheikh Abdullah and other members of the National Conference, and regularly interacted with the local cultural intelligentsia. A number of Kashmiri writers during this period drew their inspiration from the Progressive Writers Association and other prominent leftists and communists in the Indian subcontinent. The Progressive Writers Association was a radical cultural movement created in 1936 in Lucknow, India, by a group of Urdu writers who had recently published a controversial book of short stories titled *Angaray*. It had links to international anti-fascist leftist literary movements. They adhered to the doctrine of socialist realism in their literature, and believed that all artistic endeavors had to be for a political purpose, in order to reshape society and give expression to people's lives. They highlighted issues pertaining to the most

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163 G.R. Malik, "A Brief Survey of Kashmiri Literature," *Muse India*, Issue 6, 2006. To be accessed here: http://www.museindia.com/viewarticle.asp?myr=2006&issid=6&id=225, Date of Access: 9 Aug. 2016.

164 Andrew Whitehead, "The People's Militia: Communists and Kashmiri nationalism in the 1940s," *Twentieth Century Communism* 2.2 (2010) 141-168.

marginalized in Indian society, including peasants, women, and the oppressed classes, while critiquing the hypocrisy of contemporary social and religious mores. While not all members were communists, they were deemed progressive for their anti-imperial and pro-reform views.[165] Influenced by the Russian and Chinese revolutions, as well as the leftist elements in Indian nationalism, Kashmiris launched their own Progressive Writers Organization, where writers would meet informally in each other's homes, or in the local colleges, to recite poetry and read each other's writings.[166] Communist literature was available in the Valley through the Kashmir Book Shop, run by Niranjan Nat Raina, who also ran a communist paper called *Azad*.

Instead of creating their own organization, Kashmiri communists decided to base themselves in "bourgeois nationalism" and strengthen the left wing component of the National Conference. This decision was made during a communist study circle in 1942 in Srinagar, where Bakshi was also present.[167] The meeting was led by none other than Fazal Elahi Qurban, a well-known communist leader in Lahore, who went on to found the Communist Party of Pakistan.

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[165] Others, however, argue that the communist ideological component was superimposed on what was to be primarily a literary movement for social change. Its decline was caused for a number of reasons: the lack of ideological coherence, the decreasing importance of the Urdu language, Partition, the rise of modernism, as well as the accommodation of a number of progressive writers into the Indian nationalist mainstream. Nonetheless, its cultural impact was to play a critical role in postcolonial South Asian literature and cinema, including what was called the "progressive commercial culture." For a background on the Progressive Writers Association in the subcontinent, see Toor, *The State of Islam*, 52; Hafeez Malik, "The Marxist Literary Movement in India and Pakistan," *Journal of South Asian Literature,* 26, 4 (1967); Talat Ahmed, *Literature and Politics in the Age of Nationalism: The Progressive Episode in South Asia 1932-1956* (London: Routledge, 2009); Ahmed Ali, "The Progressive Writers Movement in its Historical Perspective," *Journal of South Asian Literature*, 8, 1-4 (1977-78); Priyamvada Gopal, *Literary Radicalism in India: Gender, Nation and the Transition to Independence* (London: Routledge, 2005); Aijaz Ahmad, "The Progressive Movement in Its International Setting," *Social Scientist* 39.11/12 (2011) 26-32; Rakhshanda Jalil, *Liking Progress, Loving Change: A Literary History of the Progressive Writers' Movement in Urdu* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Shabana Mahmud, "Angāre and the Founding of the Progressive Writers' Association," *Modern Asian Studies* 30.02 (1996) 447-467; Sarojmohan Mitra, "Progressive Cultural Movement in Bengal," *Social Scientist* (1979) 115-120; Ann Lowry Weir, "Socialist Realism and South Asian Literature," *Journal of South Asian Literature,* 27, 2, (Summer, Fall 1992) 135-148; Carlo Coppola, "The All-India Progressive Writers' Association: The Early Phases," *Marxist influences and South Asian literature* 1 (1974) 1-41.

[166] Raina, *A History of Kashmiri Literature,* 111. Prem Nath Pardesi was a prominent writer involved with the organization.

[167] Peer Giyas-Ud-din, *Jammu and Kashmir State and Society: Communist Movement in Kashmir* (Jammu: Jay Kay Book House) 55.

Qurban, who was on a visit to Srinagar, implored the gathering to adopt Lenin's thesis on the Eastern Question, which appealed to communists in the East to align themselves with anti-imperial movements such as the Indian National Congress, even though they might not be Marxist.[168] On the question of Partition, the Communist Party of India went back and forth in favor of Pakistan, but ultimately decided the idea of Pakistan represented feudalism and reaction.[169] As a result, a number of Kashmiri communists, who initially were ambivalent on the question of Pakistan, went along with the national party line and became closer to the Indian National Congress.[170] In Kashmir, they joined the struggle against the Dogras, working to abolish landlordism and establish a more democratic, representative state.

On the cultural front, the authors of the Naya Kashmir manifesto sought to bring together the diverse communities in the state in order to celebrate and "encourage our common culture."[171] It called for the establishment of a Radio Station in the Kashmiri language, which also would host programs in the other languages of the state (Balti, Dogri, Dardi, Gogri, Hindi, Urdu, and Punjabi). It also called for the establishment of a film and theater association, as well as the encouragement of cultural activities for the youth. The manifesto declared that the ancient monuments of the state should be protected and developed for educational value. Finally, and

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[168] This position was in contrast to M.N. Roy's more radical stance. Roy was the founder of the Communist Party of India, and believed that Indian communists should denounce the Indian National Congress and Gandhi as a bourgeois leadership.

[169] As Kamran Asdar Ali details, this official CPI line evolved from one of essential agreement with the idea that India was one nation in the 1930s, to a policy of national self-determination for each national and cultural group within India in the early 1940s, to once again, the one-nation idea in 1946. While the Partition plan was officially approved, and a separate Communist party of Pakistan created, the formal party line was to see Pakistan a result of feudal interests. See Kamran Asdar Ali, *Surkh Salam: Communist Politics and Class Activism in Pakistan 1947-1972* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[170] Nandita Haksar, *The Many Faces of Kashmiri Nationalism: From the Cold War to the Present Day*, (New Delhi: Speaking Tiger Publishers, 2015) 17.

[171] *New Kashmir*, 40.

most importantly, it called for the establishment of an Institute of Art and Culture.[172] Overall, the cultural plan was meant to promote the progressive, secular aims of Naya Kashmir.

At the time of Partition, there were three important events that occurred that impacted the development of the progressive movement. The first was the invasion of the tribals from northwest Pakistan. The second was the end to Dogra rule and the third, the formation of a Kashmiri-led government that had promised an end to the feudal order. Under Sheikh Abdullah's Emergency Administration, the relationship between cultural production and the state shifted. First, the state mobilized a Cultural Front consisting of a number of progressively inclined intelligentsia, including women, to combat pro-Pakistan sentiment in the state that had emerged with remnants of the Muslim Conference and others who were growing disillusioned with the National Conference.[173] It was also intended to galvanize locals against the tribals. Many in the Cultural Front had links to the National Conference, and had been involved in the anti-Dogra agitation. With the collapse of feudalism and the Dogra political order as well as the emergence of what was declared a people's government, the atmosphere was one of triumph and confidence.[174] Second, prompted by the desire to reach out to the Kashmiri speaking masses, the Kashmiri language was rejuvenated through the promotion of a particular type of cultural nationalism. The traditional parameters of Kashmiri literature were expanded as writers explored new avenues and styles through poetry, short stories, novels, prose, and theater. Writers affiliated with the Cultural Front composed patriotic songs for the new movement, and travelled throughout the region, holding dramas and theater on social change in villages and small towns.

[172] Ibid.
[173] G.M. Sadiq, who served as a Minister under Sheikh Abdullah, and joined Bakshi in toppling the Sheikh in 1953, played a crucial role in the formation of the Cultural Front, and was a prominent leftist with ties to leftist groups and individuals outside of Kashmir. Moulana Mohammed Sayeed, another prominent National Conference leader under Sheikh Abdullah also played an important role in the Cultural Front. See Whitehead, "A People's Militia."
[174] Raina, *A History of Kashmiri Literature*, 111.

Trilokinath Raina, a historian of Kashmiri literature, writes of the Cultural Front, "art was for life and like social change, it became socialist propaganda."[175] Prominent members of the Marxist Indian Peoples Theater Association (IPTA), including Rajbans Khanna, Shivdan Chohan, Balraj Sahni, and Sheila Bhatia, were deputed to Kashmir to train the local artists.[176] Kashmir became a popular site of activity for a number of Indian leftists.[177] The themes of the literature affiliated with the Cultural Front dealt with the promotion of socialism, anti-landlordism, secularism, and communal harmony. [178] One particular play was dedicated to Maqbool Sherwani, a National Conference worker who was brutally killed in 1947 tribals in the town of Baramulla in North Kashmir. Sherwani was memorialized for his saving non-Muslims, including Christians in Baramulla, and representing the syncretic cultural ethos of Naya Kashmir. While it is clear that a number of artists had sympathies with leftist ideology, it is difficult to state who was an actual "card-carrying member of the Communist Party." Much like Anushay Malik mentions in the case of Pakistan in the early 1950's, before the party was forced to go underground, there was "a porous dividing line between 'communist' and the rest in the everyday politics of Lahore….rather diverse groups that broadly referred to themselves as progressive."[179] Nevertheless, the Front was mobilized to meet the political needs of the nascent state.

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[175] Raina, *A History of Kashmiri Literature,* 112.

[176] The Indian People's Theater Association began in Bangalore in 1941. It moved to other cities and provinces. The Association wrote and performed radical political theater, especially in rural areas, on Japanese aggression, anti-fascism, the Bengal famine, landlordism, and the exploitation of workers. After Partition, it lost its mass character due to ideological splits and a lack of government patronage. See Michael Waltz, "The Indian People's Theatre Association: It's Development and Influences," *Journal of South Asian Literature*, Vol. 13, No. ¼ (Fall-Winter-Spring-Summer 1977-1978) 31-37; Binayak Bhattacharya, "People's Art of Performance of the Elites? Debating the History of IPTA in Bengal," Available 15 August 2016: http://rupkatha.com/ipta-in-bengal/; Nandi Bhatia, *Acts of Authority/Acts of Resistance: Theater and Politics in Colonial and Postcolonial India* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2004).

[177] K.A. Abbas made the film, Kashmir Toofan Mei (Storm over Kashmir) in 1949, while Balraj Sahni was to make Kashmir the subject of a number of his later films.

[178] Braj B. Kachru, "Dina Nath Nadim," To be accessed here: http://www.ikashmir.net/nadim/article2.html, Date of Access: 16 Aug. 2016.

[179] Anushay Malik, "Alternative Politics and Dominant Narratives: Communists and the Pakistan State in the Early 1950s," *South Asian History and Culture*, 4, 4 (2013) 524.

The Cultural Front was renamed the Cultural Congress, and in 1949, it began to publish its monthly Kashmiri literary journal, *Kwang Posh*, which ran for nearly twenty-five issues, until it ceased publication in 1956.[180] The journal included short stories and poetry from prominent leftist writers of the time, including Dina Nath Nadim, Som Nath Zutshi, Noor Mohammed Roshan, Rehman Rahi, Amin Kamil, Ghulam Nabi Firaq, Akhtar Mohiuddin and Aziz Haroon. The themes covered included land reform, descriptions of the difficulties of proletarian life, the emancipation of women, as well as Hindu-Muslim unity. G.M. Sadiq, the Minister of Education and Healthcare, and the most prominent leftist in the administration, served as the patron for the journal, bringing together artists and encouraging them to serve as interpreters of people's struggles and aspirations, as well as demanding social transformation.[181] In a speech to the Cultural Congress in 1950 he declared, "Literature…shall expose imperialist, capitalist and feudal designs on the people's freedom and give leadership and direction to their struggle and fight for world peace."[182]

Dina Nath Nadim was one progressive writer who gained prominence at this time, writing clearly as an ideological leftist against war, imperialism and capitalism. He wrote the first ever Kashmiri sonnet and opera, and experimented with free verse and prose.[183] In the first

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[180] Prior to *Kwang Posh*, there was a Kashmiri language newspaper *Gaash*, run by Ibn-i-Mahjoor (the son of Mahjoor), in 1940, although it had limited circulation. A number of college magazines, including SP Colleges' magazine Pratap and The Lala Rookh of Amar Singh College also published fiction and prose in Kashmiri.

[181] Raina, *A History of Kashmiri Literature,* 113. Some, like Parimu, have argued that Sadiq and other prominent leftists began the Cultural Front because they did not enjoy much public support. Sadiq, in particular, involved eminent progressive writers from within and outside of Kashmir, including Ali Sardar Jafri from Mumbai, and patronized them in order to show his might to political opponents. See DN Parimoo, *Kashmiriyat at Crossroads: The Search for a Destiny* (Published by P Parimoo) 217. The Kashmiri short story writer Majboor, who was also a sub-editor for *Kwang Posh*, says that he used to take the editorials of the journal to Sadiq, who would have to approve them and ensure that they did not violate the policies of the state. See "Arjun Dev Majboor- A Conversation," *Kashmir Sentinel*, To be accessed here: http://www.ikashmir.net/majboor/conversation.html, Date of Access: 16 Aug. 2016.

[182] Raina, *A History of Kashmiri Literature*, 113.

[183] Raina, *A History of Kashmiri Literature,* 117.

Kashmiri free verse, *Bi G'avi ni az* (I will not sing today), Nadim freed Kashmiri poetry from its traditional metered poetic forms, and sought to create a new ideological role for the writer:

> I will not sing today,
> I will not sing
> of roses and of bulbuls
> of irises and hyacinths
> I will not sing
> Those drunken and ravishing
> Dulcet and sleepy-eyed songs.
> No more such songs for me![184]

The poem is a patriotic call to arms of sorts; the poet, realizing the futility of poetry that praises nature (of which there was no shortage in Kashmir), is aware of the "wily warmonger with loins girt/lies in ambush for my land."[185] The warmonger was of course, Pakistan, and writers were implored to use the power of their pen to mobilize people for the benefit of the Kashmiri state against its tribal enemies. Members of the Cultural Congress wrote in Kashmiri prose for the first time. Nadim composed one of the first short stories in Kashmiri, called "Jawabi Card," a tribute to the nationalism exhibited by both men and women in resisting the tribal invasion.

While the Cultural Front mobilized most of the progressive poets of the time, not all shared its enthusiasm for the new political order under the Sheikh. Mahjoor, who also served as the chief editor of the *Kwang Posh* until 1952, wrote a number of satirical poems. From being the pen behind the National Conference's iconic poem "Arise O Gardner," which encouraged people to overthrow Dogra rule, Mahjoor expressed his disappointment with the new period in his poem *Aazadi* (Freedom):

> In western climes Freedom comes
> With a shower of light and grace,
> But dry, sterile thunder is all
> She has for our own soil.

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[184] Ibid
[185] Braj B Kachru, "Dina Nath Nadim."

Poverty and starvation,
Repression and lawlessness, -
It's with these happy blessings
That she has come to us.[186]

Speaking of the "popular" government under the Sheikh, Mahjoor speaks of the conditions of "Freedom"—poverty, starvation, repression, and lawlessness. "Freedom," he writes, "being of heavenly birth/ Can't move from door to door/ You'll find her camping in the homes of a chosen few alone." Later on in the poem, he writes, "They searched her armpit seven times/ To see if she was hiding rice/ In a basket covered with her shawl/ The peasant's wife brought Freedom home.[187] In these lines, Mahjoor derides the economic policies of Sheikh's government, which, as we have seen earlier, forcibly procured rice from farmers, especially in the rural areas. Mahjoor is most remembered for the lines that led to his imprisonment, "Though I would like to sacrifice my life and body for India, yet my heart is in Pakistan."[188]

In providing the background of the emergence of the progressive movement in Kashmir, I have focused on the influence of leftist trends in the subcontinent, but also on how the movement was impacted and shaped by Kashmir's specific feudal context and anti-monarchical struggle under the Dogras. With the creation of the Cultural Front, the links between Kashmir's cultural intelligentsia and the local state were already created under Sheikh Abdullah, and as we will see, would only be further institutionalized under Bakshi. The Front's members were tasked with promoting the values of a progressive society and conducting anti-Pakistan propaganda in the state. Yet, as we see in the case of Mahjoor, not all writers conformed to the ideologies of the

[186] "Aazaadee by Mahjoor: The Freedom Song of Kashmir," translated by Trilokinath Raina, To be accessed on *SearchKashmir*, http://www.searchkashmir.org/2008/07/aazaadee-by-mahjoor-freedom-song-of.html, Date of Access: 16 Aug. 2016.
[187] Ibid.
[188] Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, 2.

state. With the arrival of the Bakshi government, we will see how the two strands—conformity and resistance—continued to define cultural politics in Kashmir.

The Emergence of a Bureaucratic Cultural Intelligentsia

Although Bakshi had earlier interacted and worked with a number of Kashmiri communists and progressives, he was skeptical of their role within the National Conference, and tried to restrict their influence so that they would not get involved in the political opposition.[189] Some were arrested for holding sympathies with the Sheikh. The rest were mobilized by the new administration, in an effort to limit the progressive forces that could undermine Bakshi's government. The Cultural Congress, which was set up under Sheikh Abdullah, was disbanded; its members were invited to join the newly created Koshur Markaz, or Cultural Conference.[190] This, inevitably, led to a split within the communist ranks. A vast number of them were accommodated into Bakshi's government, while others grew disillusioned. Peer Giyyauddin, who at the time supported independence of the Kashmiri communists from the NC, blames "self contradiction…ideological differences within [communist ranks]…no correct theoretical line…[and] no semblance of independence," for this split.[191]

Trilokinath Raina describes the years following Sheikh Abdullah's arrest as the "years of disillusion," in his seminal study on Kashmiri literature. Following the earlier enthusiasm of the 1940s and the early 1950s, he argues that Kashmiri literature as a whole entered a phase of gloom and frustration, "a decade of despair." The progressive movement was effectively dead, and "erstwhile patrons of the progressive movement were now government bosses and their social and ethical values had undergone a sea change with the result that they voiced the

[189] Giyas-ud-Din, *Communist Movement in Kashmir*, 62.
[190] Bakshi Rashid, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed's brother, founded the Cultural Conference. Interview with Author, Hasrat Ghadda, Srinagar, Aug. 27, 2014.
[191] Giyas-ud-Din, *Communist Movement in Kashmir,* 66.

progressive movement now as a danger to their present power, prestige and stability."[192] Those who remained committed communists, like Kashmiri writer Hasrat Ghadda, grew distant from the movement, seeing that its leadership was less concerned with the poor and the workers, and more "concerned with obtaining power."[193] Raina makes reference to Bakshi being one of the primary causes of the end of progressivism in Kashmir. However, he does not address the aims and legacy of Bakshi's cultural project, what it was intended to highlight as well as obscure, and the intricacies of the relationship between the state and the cultural intelligentsia. Indeed, the context on the ground for artists was far more complicated than a betrayal "by those who wore the mask of socialism," as one of the writers of the Cultural Front, Noor Mohammad Roshan, had declared.[194]

What interventions did Bakshi's government make in the realm of culture? This section discusses how the government, influenced by the aims of the manifesto, provided patronage for individual artists, published cultural works and magazines, and created cultural institutions that were to define what constituted Kashmiri heritage and culture.

While some writers may have supported Bakshi on their own, Kashmir's cultural intelligentsia faced significant pressures to join the ranks of his administration. Bakshi would provide patronage to individual artists and writers; this included providing them with funds for their projects, commissions, and employment in the government bureaucracy. Given that most artists were from lower-middle class backgrounds, it appears that financial concerns and the desire to make a regular income were a priority for them, a condition that Bakshi was easily able to exploit. In their correspondence with the Department of Information, many asked for advances

[192] Raina, *A History of Kashmiri Literature*, 132.
[193] Interview with Author, Hasrat Ghadda. Ghadda was a former member of the Cultural Congress, who later went on to serve in the Cultural Academy. In my interview with Ghadda, the writer said that the progressive movement in Kashmir lost its fervor as many of its stalwarts were now accommodated into the state bureaucracy.
[194] Raina, *A History of Kashmiri Literature*, 134.

for their services to the government. For example, Amin Kamil, who was compiling a text on Habba Khatoon, a sixteenth century Kashmiri poetess, requested the government provide him with an advance “so that I may be able to meet the necessary requirements of my family, which are haunting me very much."[195] A few days later, he wrote again, adding, “If any payment due to me from any quarter does not come in time, all my financial arrangements for my family are disturbed and I find myself in a great fix.”[196] The Department agreed to provide Kamil with a 150-rupee advance.

In another such case, Ghulam Nabi Khayal, a Kashmiri poet, writer, and translator, narrated how he was arrested in 1958 for taking part in protests in favor of Sheikh Abdullah. After spending two years in jail, Bakshi approached him and encouraged him to leave politics as it had a bad effect financially on Khayal’s family. In turn, Bakshi offered him a posting in the government bureaucracy, gave him five hundred rupees and told him that his Kashmiri translation of the poetry of Umar Khayyam would be published into a book.[197] Khayal agreed, and went on to play an important role in the cultural affairs of the state.

In addition to sponsoring their works and providing them with employment and increased opportunities, Bakshi would also hire writers on special projects, which included commissioning poems that would be performed at *Jashn-i-Kashmir* and other cultural events throughout the region. In one incident, Khayal narrates how “A poet would normally be paid Rs. 20 for a rendition....It was that time that around Sonawari area in north Kashmir there was a devastating flood. Bakshi wanted the poets to write about it and for their poetry they were paid Rs. 50

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[195] “Advance to Mr. Amin Kamil Against Rawa Rupi and Habba Khatoon: 150 Rupees Given,” Year: 1955, Basta: 101-139, File 106, Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.
[196] Ibid.
[197] “Bakshi Number,” *Sheeraza,* (Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Academy for Arts, Culture and Language) 35.

each."[198] The idea for generating art on natural disasters is resonant with activities of the Indian People's Theater Association, which performed plays on the Bengal Famine, which Bakshi would have encountered during the days of the Cultural Front. This suggests that Bakshi was drawing upon earlier cultural repertoires. In another instance, poets were commissioned to write poems during an anti-corruption week.[199] Playwrights were also commissioned to produce scripts that could be performed in schools and colleges, promoting the ideals of Naya Kashmir to Kashmir's students.[200] But it was not simply poems and plays about Kashmir that Bakshi commissioned; he also hired poets to write praises about his benevolent and progressive rule.

These poems were performed at *Jashn-i-Kashmir,* and also published in the Department of Information's propaganda journals, including *Kashmir Today* and *Tameer*.[201] The pages of these journals are replete with poems of praise for Bakshi. Narleesh Kumar Shad contributed one such poem, "A Week of Colors" (*Haft-i-Rang*):

> Long live the cause of light
> Long live the ambassador of new memory
> You are the luster of Kashmir
> Love live Khalid-i-Kashmir
> Ecstasies in the Valley of Kashmir
> House of beauty the Valley of Kashmir
> It has your smell of wisdom
> That is the flower of the Valley of Kashmir
> You changed the destiny of the nation
> Just because of your constructive emotion
> You are a sword and supportive
> By nature, ready to sacrifice,
> But on the other side, you have a literary conscious
> I am praying according to "Ghalib" saying

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[198] Raashid Maqbool, "A Cultural Psy-Op," *Kashmir Life*, 21 July, 2014. In an issue of Indian Literature, JL Kaul writes that there were also plays that were written and performed depicting peoples struggles against the floods, entitled *Kun Kath*. See J.L Kaul, "Kashmiri Literature," *Indian Literature,* 1, 1 (October 1957) 93-96.
[199] "Payment of Royalty for the Contributions to Department Journals-Kashmir Today, Tameer, and Yojna," Year 1956, Basta 854-856, File 854, Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.
[200] "Milchar-Staged on 27th Jan 1958-At Nedous Hall," Year 1958, Basta 299-304, File 304, Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.
[201] These journals would issue out a "Bakshi Number," which would collect a series of hagiographic articles and poems on Bakshi.

An Architect of Modern Kashmir,
May you live long thousands of years
May each year have fifty thousand days.[202]

In this poem, the writer praises Bakshi, using his nickname "Khalid-i-Kashmir," or the builder of Kashmir. He highlights Bakshi's unique characteristics—both being a man of culture ("literary conscious") but also one that does not hesitate to make important decisions ("a sword…ready to sacrifice"). Bakshi is applauded for changing "the destiny of the nation," from what we imagine to be a period of darkness to one of light. In another poem, *The Era of Khalid-i-Kashmir,* written by Abbas Ali, the writer declares, "Kashmir and Khalid-e-Kashmir are one/ people speak your name with every respect." Speaking of the region's new economic prosperity, he continues:

This era has become the era of Khalid-i-Kashmir
The prosperous time is because of you
You made the desert into a garden
Now looks how the springs come in a beautiful way.
Where ever we see, its looks beautiful
Each and every one is happy and celebrating
And each year the crops are green.[203]

The mention of the crops being green is especially important given the dire economic situation in the Valley before Bakshi came to power. Another poem entitled "Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad," by Amina Tamkeen, proclaims:

The Respect of the person was elevated even further
Whenever you just looked at that person
The words you uttered was echoed by all and sundry
Everybody spoke in unison with you
You are the remedy for all the ailments of the people of Kashmir
A new period has started with your governance
The same people who used to live in their houses with their heads down
Now they utter the word Kashmir with pride[204]

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[202] "Bakshi Number," Tameer, Volume 5, Number 25 (July 1960) 15. I would like to thank Urwa Sahar for assistance in the translation.
[203] "Bakshi Number," 127.
[204] "Bakshi Number," 119.

These poems—which spoke of Bakshi's personable characteristics as well as his economic and social policies—were reflective of state government's reliance on writers and poets to promote its narratives of progress in Naya Kashmir. For a group of writers and artists that were oftentimes struggling to meet their financial needs, and gain access to a wider audience, the patronage that Bakshi provided was difficult to reject. Many went on to serve in the lower rungs of government bureaucracy, and in 1958, they were eventually accommodated in the Cultural Academy when it was established. Taking part in the state's bureaucracy also enabled them to represent Kashmir in international literary functions and meetings. For example, a delegation from Kashmir was invited to attend a "Cultural Forum" festival in Moscow. Writers such as Akhtar Mohiuddin and Shamim Ahmed Shamim toured to Moscow for the forum.[205] These opportunities allowed Kashmiri writers to travel and gain access to cultural networks outside of Kashmir.

Bakshi's ability to utilize the cultural intelligentsia was a point of contention amongst the writers. Some critiqued the new establishment role that many were now taking on, despite having to partake in it themselves. Nadim, the poet who played an integral role under Sheikh Abdullah's Cultural Front, was one of the first whose writings took a turn towards satire and irony, despite having been the voice of Naya Kashmir. In a biting satirical poem entitled "Huti Nazran Dolaan Dyaar Matyo," he writes of how moneybags were dangled in front of an artist's eyes. With this imagery, Nadim suggests that Bakshi was bribing the artist to join his fold.[206] He critiques how the artist was now more concerned with financial concerns than the authenticity of his art. In another poem, "Zinda baad me haz az chonuy sreh" or "You are the one I adore", Nadim satirizes how flattery and sycophancy were becoming a daily routine amongst the intelligentsia,

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[205] "Supply of Information to the State Dept's Agencies and Newspapers Outside the State," Year 1958, Basta 299-304, File 302, Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.
[206] Raina, *A History of Kashmiri Literature,* 136.

while "worthwhile attachments were being given short shrift."[207] The creation of a bureaucratic cultural intelligentsia led some to argue that the "left in Kashmir did not cultivate the democratic consciousness of the people to enable them to understand the role of various classes in relation to Kashmir politics… instead of consolidating itself, its votaries themselves become victims of opportunist power politics."[208] And so, the inclusion of artists in the new government was also seen as an end to the progressive movement.[209]

Alongside the patronage of artists, Bakshi started a rival journal to *Kwang Posh*, called *Gulrez*, which featured works by those who joined the Bakshi camp. In approving the journal, the Department of Information noted that it would assist in "disseminating the literature inherited by us from our glorious past and present readers with in and without the state with pieces of selected works of the present times."[210] The Department of Information also began the Urdu journal *Tameer*, the Hindi journal *Yojna*, and the English journal, *Kashmir Today*, for which it commissioned writers' articles, literature, and poetry. These journals were distributed to individuals and institutions that the government deemed important outside of Kashmir, including various embassies, colleges, and government officials, thus providing a broader audience for these works.

The Bakshi government's third intervention in cultural affairs was the creation of cultural institutions such as Lalla Rookh Publications, *Jashn-e-Kashmir,* and the Cultural Academy, and the further development of existing institutions such as Radio Kashmir. The establishment of these institutions allowed the state to bring the vast majority of cultural production within its

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[207] Ibid.
[208] Giyas-ud-Din, *Communist Movement*, xviii.
[209] While a vast number of communists and communist sympathizers affiliated themselves with the Kashmiri state, not all did so. Nandita Haksar tells the story of Sampat Prakash, a Kashmiri Pandit trade union leader, who struggled with his communist ideology as well as his Kashmiri nationalism. He grew disillusioned with the Soviet Union for supporting India's stand and was disturbed by the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah. See Haksar, *The Many Faces*, 35.
[210] "Approval Gulrez," File 1825 B-8/1952, Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.

fold. Their creation also led to a shift in the way the cultural history of the region was understood, and a canonization of the authoritative aspects of Kashmiri literature and culture, what was broadly marked as "heritage." These organizations' mandate was to preserve and collect this heritage, and also create new works that would embody the vision of Naya Kashmir.

Radio broadcasting played an important role in cultural reform. Radio Kashmir, part of the Broadcasting Corporation of India, was established in 1948 under Sheikh Abdullah's government, to promote the Kashmiri language. It initially served as news counter-propaganda to Radio Pakistan and Azad Kashmir Radio, two radio stations in Pakistan and Pakistan-administered Kashmir that Kashmiris would also listen to in order to follow developments across the border. Under Bakshi, additional programs were created to complement the state's cultural agenda. A number of the progressive writers worked for Radio Kashmir, often producing drama, short stories and prose on issues of the day as well as propaganda for the state. Many of the programs were in Kashmiri, and highlighted the important changes happening in Kashmir in regards to development and cultural progress. The Kashmiri language was able to expand into a variety of genres, including drama, and was developed further with the use of broadcasting. Radio Kashmir also attempted to bring together Kashmiri musicians, trained in classical Sufiyana music, who would come to the studio to perform for a live broadcast.[211] In this way, musicians also came under centralized government patronage. Much like the status of radio around the world, Radio Kashmir became a propaganda tool for government policies and actions.[212] Ministers and officials would be regularly called upon to detail the activities of their

[211] Sufiana kalam was based on Persian spiritual poetry, and used instruments like the santoor, sitar, tabla, and saz. It has its own *maqam*.
[212] In the case of India, see Kanchan Kumar, "Mixed Signals: Radio Broadcasting Policy in India," Economic and Political Weekly, 38, 22 (May 31-June 6, 2003) 2181. Kumar also argues that All India Radio was unable to meet with the diverse expectations of the different sections of society or play a constructive role in social change or nation building efforts (2179).

various ministries. An important point to note about Radio Kashmir is that it prioritized the Kashmiri language—through it's programming—as well as Kashmir's syncretic and Perso-Islamic influenced musical traditions. Here again we see that Kashmiri was not completely ignored by the new government; it was just seen through the lens of the preservation of culture, instead of a means through which the society could modernize. In addition, both Sufiana (Perso-Islamic) music and Hindustani classical music came together through the use of the santoor, a hundred-stringed instrument brought to the region from Central Asia. By highlighting Kashmir's diverse musical traditions—a confluence of Central and South Asian, Hindu and Muslim—Radio Kashmir attempted to portray Kashmir as a syncretic space with a unique cultural heritage. This important point was also evidenced in the cultural works collected and distributed by Lalla Rookh Publications.

In order to create an umbrella organization for the production and dissemination of social, political, and cultural literature, the state government established Lalla Rookh Publications in late 1955. It was intended to serve as a non-profit organization that collected, compiled and produced literature relating to Kashmir and sold and distributed the literature outside of Kashmir.[213] A group of concerned individuals submitted a memorandum to the cabinet, detailing the reasons for the creation of Lalla Rookh Publications.[214] The memorandum began by stating, "In addition to the press, the radio, and the cinema, the publication of cheap and readable literature of scientific and literary nature is playing a major part in raising the cultural standards of the masses." However, the memorandum noted that there was too much commercialization in publishing, which "has dampened the spirits of many a talented author."

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[213] "Government Order No. 1.D.51 of 1957," Department of Information, Private Secretariat, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Dated 27-11-1957, Srinagar State Archives.

[214] "Establishment of a Publishing Agency as Government Concern—Lalla Rookh Publications," Memorandum for Submission to the Cabinet, NO: I7B/3068/53, Dated: 24/7/53, Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.

Giving examples of universities and governments around the world that have begun their own publishing, the memorandum continued:

> In Kashmir, the necessity for such a concern has long been felt. Our budding and talented scholars, in the absence of a suitable agency to undertake the publication of their works, have languished…Even the publication of literature of tourist interest has not received the attention that it deserves. Kashmiris have also been deprived of the benefit of studying works of high literary and historical value pertaining to their country since most of them are out of print and therefore very rare and costly.[215]

The memorandum suggested that the Kashmiri state start its own publishing agency that would provide Kashmiri writers with an outlet to publish their works and increase the reading culture in Kashmir. It would also reprint "cheap editions" of important works on Kashmir. Lalla Rookh would be a "private limited company…[and] the government should purchase all or most of the shares." It urged the government to get into relationships with booksellers and agents within and outside India. Lastly, it indicated that an independent entity was needed given that anything published by the Department of Information directly would be deemed propaganda.[216] However, the Minister of Information and Broadcasting would serve as the organization's Chairman.

The memorandum suggested that the purpose of Lalla Rookh would be to "increase the reading culture in Kashmir." Given the rate of illiteracy at the time and the paucity of publishing houses, it is not implausible to imagine that writers found it difficult to publish and distribute their works. Thus, the government was able to benefit from this constraint, and situate itself in a "savior" role for Kashmir's writers. However, it had to do so discreetly, as Lalla Rookh was not intended to serve as "propaganda." Ironically, the government was to own all of the shares of the company and a Minister would serve as the Chairman, restricting the extent to which Lalla Rookh could be independent. Nevertheless, publishing with Lalla Rookh was attractive for a

[215] Ibid.

[216] Ibid.

number of writers, especially given it had links with booksellers outside Kashmir. This memorandum, however, did not cover what types of works would be covered under the organization and what the ideological bent of it would be.

Based on a list of Lalla Rookh publications, it is evident that one aim of the organization was to distribute literature from the perspective of the state government pertaining to Kashmir's political situation. This included publications on Kashmir's position in the Security Council, Kashmir's special position in India, and Pakistan's relationship with the United States.[217] The government declared that a book entitled "Kashmir in Security Council" sold 5,000 copies in its first month. These works were primarily in Urdu and English, while a few were in Kashmiri.

Alongside these publications, Lalla Rookh also published literature pertaining to Kashmir's cultural heritage. It received an initial 45,000 Rupees from the government, and a committee, headed by Pran Nath Jalali and Noor Mohammed Roshan, was created to oversee the organization. Jalali was a leading figure in the leftist movement and Roshan was a writer, and both of them had been active in the state's cultural scene. The committee assigned a series of panels that were to assemble literature on a variety of topics. Each panel consisted of a number of advisors, which included prominent writers, academics, and poets. Historical works were meant to discuss various periods in the region's history, "bearing close resemblance to our present-day problems [which] will enlighten our people about their past and also deepen their patriotic sentiment."[218] They primarily centered on important secular figures—such as Zain-ul-Abidin—the popular Muslim king in the medieval period, and Kashmir's freedom movement against the Dogras. Publication of cultural works was meant to "make our heritage widely

[217] "Statement Showing the Position of Lalla Rookh Publications," Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.
[218] "Plan of Publication," Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.

known."[219] The various panels included "Kashmir's contribution to Sanskrit literature," "Kashmir's contribution to Persian literature," "Anthology of Modern Short Stories," "Collected works of Mahjoor," "Anthology of Kashmiri Verse," and "Habba Khatoon," amongst others. While the material was mostly Kashmiri-centric, in an effort to reach out to other regions of the state, Lalla Rookh also published a few works on Dogri art and literature.

Members of the panels were deputed to procure valuable material from the families and heirs of famous Kashmiri writers, including rare historical manuscripts. For example, one panel was tasked with the collection of material from the widow of Abdul Ahad Azad, including some of his unpublished poems and personal notebooks.[220] Others were tasked with traveling throughout the region, especially to rural areas, to collect oral folk tales, proverbs and songs.[221] Additional panels were set up to commemorate particular cultural figures, including the poetesses Lalleshwari (Lal Ded) and Habba Khatoon. On April 22, 1956, Lalla Rookh celebrated Lalleshwari day, "paying homage to Kashmir's first and foremost mystic poetess, philosopher, and saint….adorned by Kashmiri women as a deity."[222] In a series of directives to the panels, Lalla Rookh Publications requested those who were collecting works of Kashmiri literature that they highlight "social realism, romantic narrative, religious narrative, nature depiction…mysticism, devotional verse, elegy."[223]

In the previous chapter, we have seen how education policies highlighted secular histories and icons of medieval Kashmir. Kashmiri history was situated at the confluence of

[219] "Plan of Publication."
[220] "Correspondence with Ibn-i-Mahjoor—Lalla Rookh Publications," Year 1955, Basta 101-139, File 101- 67/56; and "Compilation of Anthology of Kashmiri Prose," Year 1955, Basta 101-139, File 118, Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives, Jammu and Kashmir.
[221] Ibid.
[222] "Panel for the Anthology of Kashmiri Verse," Year 1955, Basta 101-139, File 117, Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives, Jammu and Kashmir.
[223] "Panel for the Anthology of Kashmiri Verse," Year 1955, Basta 101-139, File 117, Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives, Jammu and Kashmir.

Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist culture, and *Kashmiriyat* was touted as the national identity. Similarly, under Lalla Rookh, we see that careful attention was paid both to Kashmir's contribution to Sanskrit *and* Persian literature, underscoring the importance of making a composite, secular national heritage known to people. The state government attempted to negotiate the contours of multiple traditions and civilizations in order to depict Kashmir's unique, composite and exceptional cultural heritage, leading to a distinct form of cultural nationalism. In addition, through the process of selecting what works would be collected and distributed, the state situated itself as the "ultimate arbiter" for what would be included in this national cultural identity. By sending its cultural officers to various parts of the state in search of folk art and manuscripts, the state also became the purveyor of not just the work produced by its artists, but also what had been confined to the realm of "folk art." Given that Lalla Rookh was also publishing political works from the perspective of the state, we should see the collection of these cultural works as being a part of the state's efforts to promote a particular understanding of Kashmir. Kashmir's "cultural identity" was thus constructed to fit the needs of the political moment.

The compilation of the various publications was not without disagreement. Compilers did not have total control of which works would be included or not; the editors of Lalla Rookh were able to reject some of their suggestions while adding their own. An example of this is the case of Akhtar Mohiuddin, Kashmiri short story writer and novelist, who was asked to compile an anthology of short stories. Jalali suggested to Mohiuddin that his collection was incomplete and was missing some important authors. Mohiuddin responded that the works of these authors was not "up to the mark."[224] He wrote a follow-up letter asking for his payment for the compilation. Jalali responded at length writing that the introduction that Mohiuddin prepared was "not an

[224] "Letter to Mr. Jalali," Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.

attempt at the serious evaluation of the literary merit of the stories chosen for the anthology." Instead, he argued, Mohiuddin concentrated "on the political motivation of the writers and the political aims of the stories." He continued:

> Our concern does not believe in the fact that the democratic advances made by our people after the autocracy were just an "illusion." We would prefer a literary critic when writing an introduction of a book of this type to give less prominence to an unbalanced and superficial understanding of the political element in art….You have not sufficiently realized the importance of analyzing the artistic merits and demerits of each story.[225]

Given Jalali's response to Mohiuddin, it is clear that the state sought to use Kashmir's cultural intelligentsia towards a particular end—to highlight the progress that was being made in Kashmir. Mohiuddin's introduction to the anthology, which Jalali claimed stated that the advances made after autocracy were "just an illusion," was clearly not welcome in the body of work sponsored by the state.

On November 20, 1957, Lalla Rookh Publications was disbanded, and its functions were incorporated back into the Department of Information.[226] The reasons for this are unclear, but are potentially related to the creation of the Democratic National Conference, led by G.M. Sadiq, in 1958.[227] Since a number of those who worked at Lalla Rookh were closely linked to Sadiq, it is possible that the organization was deemed a threat to Bakshi, and it folded. Despite it's short-lived existence, however, Lalla Rookh played a crucial role in setting the parameters for what was constituted as Kashmiri culture. What was "included" within Kashmir's cultural repertoire was intended to be a reflection of the state's secular and progressive aims.

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[225] Ibid.
[226] "Winding up of Lalla Rookh Publications," Year 1958, Basta 69-80, File 72, Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives, Jammu and Kashmir.
[227] GM Sadiq, DP Dhar, and Mir Qasim, who were all members of Bakshi's administration, broke off and created a political opposition under the Democratic National Conference, which was opposed to the highhandedness and the corruption that was occurring in the state. Members of the cultural intelligentsia, especially those with communist sympathies that were loyal to GM Sadiq joined the DNC. However, in 1960, Bakshi managed to bring the DNC within his fold. See Puri, "Jammu and Kashmir" in Myron Wiener, *State Politics in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968) 231

After Lalla Rookh Publications was disbanded, on July 7, 1958, Bakshi's government established the Jammu and Kashmir Academy for Arts, Culture and Languages, or the Cultural Academy.[228] The scope of the Cultural Academy was broader than Lalla Rookh Publications, as it also incorporated music, drama, theater, and dance, and was especially invested in promoting the regional languages of the Jammu and Kashmir state, including Dogri and Ladakhi. It appears that the government was aware of the possibilities of tension between the three regions, and attempted to ensure that Jammu and Ladakh were represented in the construction of a regional cultural identity. *Jashn-e-Kashmir* also attempted to include cultural performances from Ladakh, Kargil, Poonch, and Jammu. All cultural activities in the region effectively came under the purview of the Cultural Academy, which also developed ties with Sahitya Akademi in New Delhi. The latter institutionalized a series of awards for Kashmiri writers and poets.

As cultural production increasingly became bureaucratized, a number of traditional art forms suffered and their political relevance was neutralized. One, in particular, was *Bhand Pather*, a form of satirical theater that was especially popular in rural areas, and traced itself to Kashmir's medieval period. *Bhand pather* is a folk form that focused on satire and resistance as its main theme. It could be performed anywhere, and was usually not scripted. Under the Dogras, it was considered a "remover of sorrows," for Muslim peasants that were forced into labor.[229] Traveling *bhands* would utilize "phir kath," or twisted talk, which would only be known to those who were familiar with the local idiom. It was through "phir kath" that Kashmiris were able to decode the serious messages in the comedy, unknown to the Mughal, Sikh, or Dogra officers.[230] Nonetheless, as contemporary cultural critic Arshad Mushtaq argues, a number of groups that

[228] Government of Jammu and Kashmir, "July 9, 1958" Press Notes, 1958, Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.
[229] Bhat, *Loss of a Syncretic Theaterical Form*, 41.
[230] Ibid.

were involved in *Bhand Pather* came under government patronage and were dependent on grants from the Cultural Academy. With this institutionalization of what was an indigenous folk form, Mushtaq states that *bhands* lost their historical independence from the political establishment.[231] As Javaid Iqbal Bhat suggests, this resulted in a sanitization of the *bhand* form, which had previously contested the binds of national identity, and instead constituted itself in a local logic. Bhat argues that art form presented us with a non-idealized version of *Kashmiriyat*, one that spoke of commonalities between religious communities, but was also attentive to the differences caused by the socio-economic makeup of the state:

> The *bhand pather* as a typical cultural specimen is an ensemble of differences and commonalities between the two communities (Muslims and Pandits), and yet, one does not fail to appreciate an underlying cohesive vision, born as much of the psychological makeup of the populace, economic compulsions, historical fusion without excluding the geographical causes.[232]

It is this attention to a complex local history that gets lost when *bhand pather* becomes institutionalized through the state, which "signified an aggressive appropriation drive to strengthen the larger idea [of a composite, national identity] at the expense of the smaller frames."[233] The loss of a once cherished art is depicted in Salman Rushdie's novel, *Shalimar the Clown*. A *bhand pather* show is being performed in an auditorium in Srinagar. Inside the auditorium, no one is watching the *bhands*, all are more concerned about slogans that are being chanted outside of the auditorium.[234] Having lost its ability to serve as a subversive act against authority –be it Mughal, Afghan, Sikh, or Dogra– the folk form lost its credibility.

Of and Beyond the State: Literature as a Counter-narrative

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[231] "1990 Was A Wakeup Call for Kashmir Theater," Interview with Arshad Mushtaq by *Kashmir Reader*, To be accessed here: http://kashpost.blogspot.qa/2015/07/1990-was-wakeup-call-for-kashmir-theatre.html, Date of Access: 16 Aug. 2016.
[232] Bhat, *Loss of a Syncretic Theatrical Form,* 52.
[233] Ibid.
[234] Salman Rushdie, *Shalimar the Clown* (London: Random House) 2006.

In the previous sections, I have shown how the Kashmiri state attempted to bureaucratize cultural production and set the contours for what constituted Kashmiri "cultural heritage." While the state had significant influence in cultural affairs, some Kashmiri artists found ways to subvert the state narrative, despite being in the government bureaucracy. This suggests that while the state certainly had control over the region's cultural production, it was not hegemonic. I highlight how, far from being a "period of disillusionment" as suggested by Raina, the historian of Kashmiri literature, Kashmiri writers managed to find their own ways of shaping and contributing to the region's literature. While the earlier example of Akther Mohiuddin's experience with Lalla Rookh suggests that the state was not interested in promoting literature that contested its aims, artists found refuge in short stories, poetry and novels, resulting in a particular type of cultural efflorescence in this period that focused its attention upon the social issues facing Kashmiri society. Alongside overt propaganda for the state, their personal writings turned more critical, looking into concerns plaguing Kashmiri society.[235] These works were independently published by smaller scale publishing houses, such as Ali Mohammad and Sons, based in downtown Srinagar, in an area called Habba Kadal. While the authors of these works attempted to publicize them with the government so that they could get greater distribution into schools and various libraries, it is not clear whether the government complied.

Due to restrictions to archives on Kashmir, fiction becomes a crucial site of exploration for the historian. It can serve as a counter-discourse, and provides a glimpse of history exercised from Kashmiri statist and nationalist renderings. In this case, fiction provides a glimpse away from state-directed propaganda and narratives of progress in Kashmir. In the literature from this period, at a time when *Jashn-e-Kashmir* was being celebrated and Bakshi's rule was posited as

[235] Some of these writers include Mirza Beg Arif, Amin Kamil, Ali Mohammed Lone, Bansi Nirdosh, Rehman Rahi, Mohammed Hajini, Ghulam Nabi Gowhar, Dina Nath Nadim, and Sofi Ghulam Mohammed.

the harbinger of progress, a number of writers explored themes of corruption, greed, obsession with money, loss of moral values, and lack of loyalty in their writings, showcasing how it turned son against father, and neighbor against neighbor.[236] While they explored these themes, they did not make any explicit political commentary on Kashmir's political status. They were later compiled by the Sahitya Akedemi, based in New Delhi, in an attempt to promote literature from various states in the country. In one satirical story by Amin Kamil, "The Cockfight," Shahmal, a woman who is married to Ghulam Khan, wants her husband to buy her an expensive rooster so that she can brag to her neighbor, Jana. It seems Shahmal wants the rooster to spite Jana, who has five hens and one rooster, while Shahmal only has two hens. Instead of being the good-omen she had hoped, Shahmal is disappointed when she sleeps that night as she hears the rooster crowing in the dead of the night. She attempts to wake her husband, and tells him to kill the rooster, as "it is a creature of ill-omen." Primarily, however, she is worried about how Jana will respond in the morning. The next day, she avoids leaving her home, and looks at repugnance at the new rooster. She vows to have him killed by her neighbor, Samad, who has a reputation for the "expert slaughter of fowl." After returning home, she finds her rooster and Jana's rooster in a "cock-fight," the latter whom she had referred to as a "scavenger" rooster. Seeing her rooster gaining the upper hand, she backtracks on her intention to kill him saying, "A cock of mine may have a thousand vices, he may even crow at the fall of the night, these are of no account in my eyes if he has the proper fighting mettle. This was the type of cock I wanted. Otherwise, is not the market flooded with innumerable stinking, scavenger cocks?" Kamil's short story is

[236] See Amin Kamil, "The Cockfight," in Hriday Kaul Bharati's edited volume, *Contemporary Kashmiri Short Stories* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2005) 15-25. Also see Bansi Nirdosh, "To Slavery Born," in Neerja Mattoo's edited volume *The Stranger Beside Me: Short Stories from Kashmir* (Srinagar: Gulshan Books, 1994) 63-71; Sufi Ghulam Mohammad, "The Paper Tigers"in Neerja Mattoo's edited volume *Kath: Stories from Kashmir* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2011) 124-132. All three stories revolve around the greed and desire for more material things that had risen in society, and how poorly people were willing to treat each other and their own selves for more money.

considered one of the most widely read in the Kashmiri language. Through a simple tale of two competing housewives, and their roosters, the story speaks to jealousy, disappointment, and regret. It is a satirical take on what appears to be increasing greed and competitiveness within Kashmiri society.

Other writers wrote of how political change in Kashmir only benefited some, while life was the same for "the wretched of the earth."[237] Some also examined the changes wrought by those who had recently acquired monetary wealth, through corruption and sycophancy.[238] In Ali Mohammad Lone's short story, "The Strange Mohalla," a man who has recently acquired wealth is trying to get an elderly woman who lives in his area out of her house, so that he may take over. Under the Dogras, there used to be a brothel in the area, and so the neighborhood is one of ill repute. The woman, Farzi Tuj, lost two of her sons to Kashmir's freedom struggle against the Dogras. Her third son disappeared during the time of the tribal invasion. Because of these tragedies in her life, she "has become mad," and yells obscenities at passerby. The man, Wali Mohammad, "had been a petty shopkeeper, but now he is a big contractor, dealing in lakhs."[239] Speaking of his perceived piety, the writer notes that "the numberless times he rubs his brow on the floor in prayer have left a permanent dark coin-like mark on his forehead, which he wears proudly….They have set up a school in the *mohalla* (neighborhood) to give religious instruction to the children and [he] contributes money to it." Wali Mohammad does not allow Rashid, Farzi's orphaned grandon, entry into the school as he believes "he is not fit for education, he can only become a thief or a bad character or like his father, die like a dog on the road, shot with a

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[237] In the poem Rubaaiyat, Mirza Ghulam Arif Beg writes: "Strange was the division made by God/of the gains of political revolution/bullets to the people/to the leaders wealth; these got pain and sickness/those affluence and wine." See Mirza Ghulam Arif Beg, "Rubaaiyat," in Trilokinath Raina's edited volume *Mahjoor and After: Modern Kashmiri Poetry* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2005) 49; Taj Begum Renzu, "The Beggars at the Durgah," in Mattoo, *Kath,* 132-139.

[238] See Ali Mohammad Lone, "The Strange Mohalla," in Mattoo, *Kath*, 72-84.

[239] Lone, "The Strange Mohalla," 77.

bullet." Wali Mohammad finds Farzi's presence in his neighborhood intolerable, and he begins to plan a way for her to leave: "To this end he decided to stay here for longer periods and build contacts with the other residents of the neighbourhood, greeting them with a smile …He gave a generous donation to the mosque…"[240] He hires a broker to buy the house from Farzi, who spitefully rejects the offer. Wali Mohammad then tries to get the support of Sula Gondol, the owner of the local shop, where the men of the neighborhood go to smoke and discuss politics. Gondol is uneasy with Wali Mohammad's anger, and tells him to leave Farzi alone. Wali retorts, "Just say the word and I will drag her out by her two feet and throw her out of her house." Gondol becomes angry and bursts, "What gives you the right to say all this, you begger? Or has all this new-found prosperity gone to your head and made it overflow?"[241] The incident causes all of the men and children to come to the shop, to see what is happening, and women come out to their balconies and windows. Wali Mohammad is forced to walk away. In the end, the author writes:

> Truly it was a strange Mohalla….There is no brothel here now, but a pious *Namazi* (one who prays) is still made fun of, a respectable contractor is humiliated and disgraced just for the sake of a mad old woman, who devoured her three sons and whose grandson Rashid is rolling in the dust and grime of this Mohalla. This unfeeling, insensitive Mohalla, at the very mention of whose name people shudder and plug their ears.[242]

"The Strange Mohalla" is a critique of the behavior of those with newfound wealth, but also, through the character of Wali Mohammad, an indictment of their religious hypocrisy. Being a contractor in this period meant that one was involved in high-level corruption, but could still enjoy the benefits of civilized society. In this neighborhood of sexual ill-repute, the people—and

[240] Lone, "The Strange Mohalla," 78.
[241] Lone, "The Strange Mohalla," 82.
[242] Lone, "The Strange Mohalla," 83.

not the the pious contractor—appear to be on the right side of morality with their defense of a woman whose three sons were sacrificed in Kashmir's political battles.

While a number of writers offered an indirect social critique of the period, some, like Rehman Rahi, took on Bakshi himself. Perhaps no account of Bakshi's rule was as damning as Rehman's satirical poem in Kashmiri, *Maefi Nama (*Apology*)*.[243] Rahi was one of the leading progressive poets of the time. He joined the bureaucracy under Bakshi, and took part in *Jashn-e-Kashmir* and the other cultural projects of the state. However, it appears that his leanings were towards Sadiq and the Democratic National Conference. In the poem, the poet apologizes for having insulted the "gold-laden ruler," referring to Bakshi. Later on, he suggests the ruler was insulted because Rahi had dared to mention the ineffectiveness of a particular policy. Evoking a series of images, the poet satirizes the ruler's dictatorial style ("If someone dares to smell a rose without your due permission, that is mutiny"), and his total control over all aspects of life in the country, including life and death.

> If you call a mirage a sea, that will be the reality
> If you call blood, Zam Zam, who has the guts to say it is not?
> If you call stumbling, dance, who can question you?
> An insane person with whom you are happy, he gets the seal of being a dervish
> If you are not ready to tolerate Socrates, you will give him the poison
> Who am I to challenge you?

In the next set of lines, Rahi writes of the desires of the people, and how they have been quashed.

> But then isn't it natural to have a desire
> Isn't it natural if in winters, we read the book of the coming Spring
> But my lord, if it makes you upset, we will nail the windows
> We will tell the breeze that announces the spring, that he is suspect
> If you give the order, we will burn Gulrez to Ashes
> There will be no morning and after every night, neither will Noashlab seek her prince
> We will tell the tulip that Mehjoor was gone out of his mind, that is why he asked for your welfare

[243] Rehman Rahi, "Maefi Nama," in *Siyah Roodi Jaryan Manz (Under the Dark Downpours): A Collection of Kashmiri Poems* (Srinagar: Delhi: JK Offset Printers, 1958) 20-24. I would like to thank Raashid Maqbool for helping me with the translation of this Kashmiri poem.

Azad was complaining in vain, he was also out of his mind
Why was he raising these issues, it is God who decides who is poor and who is wealthy

The last line, in particular, is in reference to the poet Azad's socialist ideology, and references the death of progressive thought under Bakshi. Yet, what is most interesting in these series of lines is that the people themselves, have "nailed the windows," perhaps suggesting the widespread compliance that had taken root in Bakshi's era. The next set of lines ridicule the institutions in Bakshi's government, referring to how they were filled with unqualified individuals, including criminals, as well as the censorship and suppression which led people to curtail their own conscience.

If it was your wish, the cattle thieves will be made judges in your rule
If someone wanted to boast about his intelligence, he was shown his place
The police officers smuggle drugs in your order
The casinos are thrown open by the mullahs in your order
If you forbid, the newspapers were burnt on roads
Everybody told his conscience that it is absurd to express

In the end, the poet directly takes on the government's lack of legitimacy:

You never had to take the favors of the people,
Time was in your favor, and made you the king
You sensed the blowing winds, and then you did commerce with the traders
You fulfilled your own desires
Someones hut was burned, but you added another story to your house

By not "taking favors," Rahi suggests that Bakshi never had to seek the approval of people (through a legitimate transfer of power); instead, he struck a deal with the Government of India, and was made King. While a number of Kashmiris suffered losses on account of this deal, Bakshi, according to the poet, benefited materially.

It is in one line, however, in which the project of cultural reform—in particular the patronage of the cultural intelligentsia—is laid bare. The poet says, "It is true that I have written poems in praise of you/ but it is also a fact, that I just want to save my life." These two lines shed

light the fundamental paradox of Bakshi's project of cultural reform. While the cultural intelligentsia did partake in this project, the poet wishes to underscore the pressures that he, and others, dealt with, in a time of great political suppression as well as economic need. In essence, these lines signify the immense contradiction that was involved in maintaining Bakshi's rule, even for those who were ostensibly a part of it. Nevertheless, despite its attempts to do so, the state did not maintain cultural hegemony in Kashmir. A number of Kashmir's cultural intelligentsia continued to write shorts stories and poems that contested the dominant narratives of the state in this time. In the next section, we will see how this plays out in the life of one writer, Akhtar Mohiuddin.

Akhtar Mohiuddin: Story-Telling in the Age of Rhetoric

In this last section, I turn to the privately published works of Akhtar Mohiuddin, the short story writer, novelist, and playwright, who we came across earlier in his correspondence with Lalla Rookh. Mohiuddin's career spanned the second half of the twentieth century, and effectively began under Bakshi's government. He authored a number of collections of short stories, novels, travelogues, and plays. Mohiuddin's first collection of short stories, *Sath Sangar*, was published in 1955, and he was the first Kashmiri to receive the prestigious Sahitya Akedemi award in 1958, at the age of 30. He is also credited with writing the first Kashmiri novel, *Doad-e-Dag* in the early 1950s.

Mohiuddin was born to a middle-class family on April 17, 1928 in Srinagar. He attended S.P. College and after graduation, he was hired as a clerk in the Constituent Assembly in 1951. He began his literary career by writing short stories in Urdu, and received second position in an international short story contest in 1954 for his story *Pondrich*. Soon after, he associated himself with the Cultural Congress, and was able to gain a sizeable readership by publishing in the

literary journal, *Kwang Posh*.[244] Along with a number of other writers, he turned to Kashmiri, feeling that he could express himself more in his native language. Once Lalla Rookh Publications was established, Mohiuddin asked them for financial help as he was in dire need. He requested that they help him sell and distribute his recent book, *Doad e Dag*.[245] He also presided over a number of panels for Lalla Rookh Publications, including the anthology of short stories mentioned above. After serving in a number of government posts, he was promoted as Secretary for the Cultural Academy.

Mohiuddin, like Rahi and Nadim, had to navigate two different roles: government servant and artist. Instead of seeing the two as being in contrast to one other, or of one being in "resistance" to the other, I argue that we need to examine his works as an individual's way of negotiating multiple demands on his/her life. Trilokinath Raina analyzes Mohiuddin's writings as "blazing a new trail, for in his short stories you find for the first time a realistic portrayal of characters and situations and deftly woven plots, unlike what the unreal world of the progressives….the accent is rather on revealing the mental processes at work in the psyche of very ordinary individuals."[246] His writings use modernist fictional techniques, including stream of consciousness and interior monologue. To be sure, the self that Mohiuddin depicts is one that is full of contradictions, driven, at some points, to madness. It is pushed to its limits by greed, avarice, loneliness, but also, as Mohiuddin makes clear, helplessness. Mohiuddin eventually seeks redemption for his characters, highlighting the fractional nature of society in which people had to learn how to operate, to function, and as Rahi succinctly wrote, to "save my life." Very little, however, has been said about the type of society Mohiuddin depicts and how the

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[244] "Akhtar Mohiuddin and Ali Mohammad Lone," *Indian Literature, Journal Published by Sahitya Akademi,* 2, 2 (Apr.—Sept. 1959) 89-92.
[245] "Doad e Dag: Correspondent between Akhtar Mohiuddin and Department of Information," Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.
[246] Raina, *A History of Kashmiri Literature,* 194.

"political" in his work is mediated by the social.

Mohiuddin covers a range of themes in his short stories and novels, which serve as an archive of the every day in Naya Kashmir—of people's fears, doubts, concerns, strengths, and weaknesses. In the short story, "Does anyone have the courage?" he depicts a Kashmiri Pandit mother who is unhappy that a Kashmiri Muslim man is attempting to make conversation with her son on the bus, which perhaps underscores the suspicion that had emerged between the two communities in light of the developments mentioned in the previous chapter.[247] In another story, "Death and the Grapevine," a child is run over by a car. The witnesses to the crime place "blame" on a number of factors: increasing material prosperity that has led to so many cars on the road, the corrupt administration for building poor roads and infrastructure, present day mothers who are too concerned with their shopping to look after their children, increasing birth rates, inefficient officials, and poor traffic police. Unable to make sense of these varying allegations, the last witness declares that God dictated that the child must die.[248] In "The Game of the Snowballs," Mohiuddin critiques the hypocrisy of the wealthy class through the story of a man who forced his servant to sit outside in the cold, which led to his death. The same man is later seen grieving at the servant's funeral.[249] In the story "Election," he shows how an election is conducted in Kashmir, though the activities happening on election day in a particular neighborhood. The rulers already know the results, but feel that "some theatrics are essential."[250] And so, hired hands representing the opposition raise green flags, which leads their homes to be stoned. The next day, the party with the red flag (National Conference) wins, and the same hired

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[247] Akhtar Mohiuddin, "Does anyone have the Courage?" in Mattoo, *Kath,* 68-72.
[248] Akhtar Mohiuddin, "Death and the Grapevine," in ed. Azhar Hilal, *Looking into the Heart of Life*: *English Translations of Some Kashmiri Short Stories of Akhtar Mohiuddin (*Srinagar: Alhayat Printographers) 60.
[249] Akhtar Mohiuddin, "The Game of the Snowballs," in ed. Azhar Hilal, *Looking into the Heart of Life*: *English Translations of Some Kashmiri Short Stories of Akhtar Mohiuddin* (Srinagar: Alhayat Printographers) 124.
[250] Mohiuddin, Akhtar. *Short Stories of Akhtar Mohiuddin*, translated by Syed Taffazull Hussain (Self Published, 2015) 74.

hands take out a victory procession.

In stark contrast to the pages of *Tameer* and *Kashmir Today*, which, as we have seen in the first chapter, spoke of the progress that was being made in the state, these writings make visible the fractures, anxieties, and exploitation that marked the Bakshi period, and ultimately Naya Kashmir. The short story "Election" highlights the lack of democracy under the "people's government," and the ways in which elections are manipulated to serve the ruling party. The stories make visible the corruption that comes with newfound wealth as well as the tensions between various communities and various social classes within Kashmiri society. Most importantly, they give expression to the compulsions to compromise that individuals made in their day-to-day affairs.

These compulsions are evidenced in Mohiuddin's first novel, *Doad wa Dag.*[251] In the story, Mohiuddin delves into the lives and thought processes of four characters—Fatima, Raja, Sham Sahib and Abdul Gani. Fatima is the older sister to Raja, and is married to Sham Sahib. The sisters are orphaned, and Sham Sahib decides to take Raja under his care. Fatima is gravely ill, but Sham Sahib, who does not believe in going to hospitals, takes her to the local hakim and the shrines. In the meantime, Sham Sahib's accountant, Abdul Gani, makes a number of advances to Raja, who seems to be attracted to him, but is fearful of the consequences of breaching social etiquette. Abdul Gani is depicted as a selfish man; he marries two women, one for her dowry and the other for her looks, but divorces them soon after marriage once he tires of them. Sham Sahib also marries Raja to an older man, who is a widow and has three children; Raja sees him more as a father than a husband, and thinks sometimes of Abdul Gani.

Sham Sahib, who was previously portrayed as a generous, kind man, begins to lose

[251] Akhtar Mohiuddin, *Doad wa Dag,* (Srinagar: Ali Mohammad and Sons). I would like to thank Saleem Malik for helping me with the translation of the Kashmiri text.

money, and is in debt. He takes his anger out on Fatima, and beats her. One day, seeing Fatima in such a state, Raja raises her voice and the neighbors intervene. Out of jealousy, it seems that the other men in the neighborhood want to settle scores with Sham Sahib, and they force the husband and wife to get a divorce. Fatima lives with Raja and her husband, who is not happy to have her in the house. One day, Fatima falls ill and Raja takes her to the hospital. There, so she meets Abdul Gani, who takes care of Fatima and makes sure she is well attended. Abdul Gani tells Raja that he will marry Fatima and take care of her. Raja hastily agrees. After the wedding, she visits her sister, and Abdul Gani persuades her to spend the night. The three sleep in the same room. In the course of the night, Abdul Gani rapes Raja, while Fatima watches, unable to say anything. Raja soon learns that Abdul Gani brings women home, and regularly fights with Fatima. She continues to sleep with him, realizing that it encourages him to treat Fatima better. After some time, Fatima dies, and Raja begins to avoid Abdul Gani. He starts to visit her at her home, and her husband becomes suspicious. He divorces her, and after some months, Abdul Gani proposes to her and they get married. She appears happy to marry him, but soon realizes his infidelities. One day Raja realizes she is pregnant, and Abdul Gani is enraged; he does not want to spend money on a child. He hires a midwife to give Raja poison to abort the baby. Raja begins to bleed heavily, and is about to die. Abdul Gani, feeling remorse, takes her to the hospital, where she survives. In the end, it appears a change has washed over Abdul Gani, and he transforms, becoming a dutiful husband to Raja.

Doad wa Dag is the story of lower-middle class Kashmiri society, at the cusp of change. What is striking about the narration is that Mohiuddin rejects making any judgments on the morality of the characters. While a few critics have criticized the lack of a moral message in the story, Raina argues that Akhtar is not interested in serving as a custodian of moral ethics, setting

him apart from much of the progressive literature in South Asia.[252] In addition, I suggest that Mohiuddin attempts to give insight to the compulsions that make people act as they do, whether it is Sham Sahib's increasing debt, Raja's desire to save her sister, or even Abdul Gani's obsessive desire to escape poverty. Compulsion seems to drive much of the characters, but Akhtar also does not deny them their agency in shaping and justifying how they lead their life. It is a sharp, searing portrayal of society and human relationships—greed, jealousy, desire, selfishness, marital problems, adultery, lust, helplessness—but also of forgiveness, and redemption. In one important scene, Abdul Gani is shown as being kind to a dog that was beaten by a group of rowdy children, portraying a redemptive quality in a man who has otherwise destroyed so many lives. It could be that *Doag wa Dag* serves as a reflection of the broader Kashmiri society, which faced a number of crises in this period of transition. Perhaps Akhtar wishes for his readers to sympathize with the decisions his characters take, compromises that he and those around him had to regularly make.

The complex inner worlds that Kashmiris had to navigate are further depicted in the short story, "I can't tell." The story is set in 1958 in Lal Chowk, the business hub of the city. The narrator, who we presume to be Akhtar, is observing a curious scene evolve in the market. Near four-dozen police officers who are wearing the uniform of the Kashmir Police descend upon the market area. The narrator says that the men are actually from the Central Reserve Police, but that "the Indian ruler had resorted to this stratagem so that if per chance some news reporter saw them and wrote a report it would be the Kashmiri government which would get a bad name…centre would remain blameless."[253] In a few minutes, a government strongman, Qadir Chaan, starts to beat a pedestrian. A crowd gathers, and the police charges against those who are

[252] Raina, *History of Kashmiri Literature*, 209.
[253] Mohiuddin, *Short Stories of Akhtar Mohiuddin,* 30.

assembled, and shoots tear gas in the air.[254] The next day, the narrator reads the local English and Urdu dailies, which tell the story differently, blaming "anti-national" elements for stirring up trouble. The narrator decides to meet Qadir Chaan. Upon visiting his house, he notes that the family is poor, and that Qadir Chaan has a few daughters, one of marriageable age. The narrator familiarizes himself with the family, and Qadir Chaan opens up to him about his life and his many responsibilities. He seeks forgiveness from God for his many sins, and feels deep remorse for his actions, but declares that he has no options. Once the narrator reveals his true intentions for visiting Qadir Chaan, the latter tells his story. He says that after Sheikh Abdullah's arrest, he was poor, and the price of essential items had increased. His mother suddenly died and he was unable to get even a cloth for her shroud due to financial constraints.[255] As a result, he began to feel betrayed by Sheikh Abdullah, whom he saw as being responsible for his financial plight. In a subsequent protest following the Sheikh's arrest, a group of people had raised slogans in favor of the Sheikh. Enraged, Qadir Chaan became angry at their foolishness, and started to beat some of the people. One person was killed.[256] He says that Bakshi's brother, Bakshi Rasheed (who was also responsible for developing the Cultural Conference) told him that he could avoid jail as long as he worked for the government. He had to create scenes at various places, so that the police would arrive, and anti-national elements could be blamed. This would allow the state to bolster its security apparatus. In turn, he would receive compensation from the government. Upon hearing this story, the narrator becomes emotional, and declares, "O people intensify your struggle for freedom…liberate Qadir Chaan from his bondage…"[257]

In the story, Mohiuddin sheds light on the dire circumstances that lead individuals to seek

[254] Ibid, 35.
[255] Ibid, 59.
[256] Ibid, 60.
[257] Ibid, 73.

state patronage as well as the complex inner moral worlds through which these individuals justify their participation in the system. Perhaps, Mohiuddin sought to give expression to his own helplessness. The lack of progress imbues his writings, leaving the narrator/Akhtar to ultimately demand liberation from this bondage.

Conclusion

In the 1990s, Akhtar Mohiuddin renounced his Padma Shri (the fourth highest civilian award given in India), in the wake of mass killings during the armed movement. He had earlier renounced his Sahitya Akademi award after the hanging of Maqbool Bhat, a Kashmiri pro-freedom leader in the 1980s, which he had campaigned against. In the last two decades of his life, he wrote critical short stories on Kashmir's evolving political solution. His son and son-in-law were both killed in the violence. He was the first Kashmiri writer to dedicate his novel *Jahnamuk Panun Panun Naar* in 1975 to the person "who would fire first bullet to set things right in Kashmir".[258]

Akhtar's development as a writer—from being one of the artists that was incorporated into the state's cultural intelligentsia to renouncing national level awards for his writings—reflects the complex interplay between conformity and resistance in this chapter. This was to be the fate of Kashmir's progressive intellectuals who provided a moral critique of the Kashmiri state, but were also compromised by that very state. The state needed Kashmir's cultural intelligentsia in order to implement Naya Kashmir. Culture was as integral to the state-building project as was education and economic development. Intervening in the realm of culture allowed the state to expand its power, not just in terms of publishing particular works, but also hosting state-level events that served as symbolic tools to reflect progress in a society that was reeling

[258] Bilal Handoo, "The Prophesy," *Kashmir Life,* 6 Jul. 2015, To be accessed here: http://www.kashmirlife.net/the-prophecy-issue-16-vol-07-81750/, Date of Access: 16 Aug. 2016.

under political instability.

The state government wanted to ensure that cultural production fit the needs of the political moment. A vast majority of the cultural intelligentsia was incorporated within the purview of the state, tasked with consolidating a secular Kashmiri culture and heritage and promoting narratives of progress under Naya Kashmir. At the same time, this incorporation did not entail that these writers were completely subsumed, as evidenced from their contestations within state institutions as well as their writings that were privately published or collected many years later. Many of these appear to be at odds with the narratives of the state in their satirical treatment of developments in Kashmiri society. The bureaucratization of culture, however, led to a decline in the progressive movement, and to a certain extent, leftism in Kashmir. As its former proponents were accommodated into the state's bureaucracy, there were very few that could maintain the mantle of progressivism.

Despite the decline in the progressive moment, I conclude that Kashmir's cultural intelligentsia articulated the cultural contours of Naya Kashmir, and actively cultivated a sense of Kashmiri distinctiveness. The implications for this are important. It is possible that the Kashmir-centric approach of this cultural production in Naya Kashmir contributed to enhancing a strong regional identity, and may have inadvertently contributed to a popular notion of Kashmir being "exceptional" or "unique." This approach may have contributed to the kinds of Kashmiri politics that the state was allegedly trying to subvert. It is this "uniqueness" of Kashmir—a cultural space outside of the mores of India and Pakistan—that more contemporary Kashmiri nationalists perhaps took to in the seventies and eighties, highlighting a strong sense of cultural nationalism and trying to create a separate cultural framework from these two nation-state models. Ironically, it was the Kashmiri state itself that created the conditions for this to occur. In addition, while the

previous chapter focused on how the policies of the government produced opposition from Muslims and Pandits and led to tensions on the ground, here the cultural policies of the state produces a Kashmiri cultural nationalism to which *both* Pandits and Muslims contributed. Thus, Naya Kashmir's policies, when implemented in society, were beyond the state's control, underscoring how the state building project is fraught with internal contradictions and contestations.

Chapter Four

The State of Emergency: State Repression, Political Dissent, and the Struggle for Self-Determination

Introduction

In his story "The Shadow and the Substance," Kashmiri writer Amin Kamil, who was closely associated with the Progressive Writer's Movement in Kashmir, and later joined the Jammu and Kashmir Cultural Academy, presents a character named Manohar.[259] Manohar was the son of Pandit Samsar Chand, who was sent to jail in 1946 for fighting Dogra rule. Manohar, on the other hand, was in a very different line of work. He describes himself as a shadow, "the same shadow that accompanies every man. Sometimes it stands in front of him, sometimes behind, now at his right, now to his left." We soon find that Manohar is an informer:

> I was an employee of the Secret Police Service—an informer. You may want to know which Secret Police Service, because there are two such agencies here: the Kashmir Special Staff and the Indian Secret Police. Over here, there are two faces to everything. There is the Indian Reserve Police as well as the state's own Kashmir Police. There is a Central Information Department as well as the state's own Information Department. There are even two flags….Here you will find two parallel governments, two outfits, two secrets, two pairs of hands always held out in their own separate ways, to protect the freedom of individuals. That is why I hasten to explain that I was a shadow from the Indian Secret Police---a nameless being, an informer…[260]

Manohar narrates his decision to follow a Muslim man whom he sees in the area of Lal Chowk, which had the day before experienced a bomb blast nearby.[261] The man's demeanor makes Manohar suspicious, and he decides to become his shadow, "an orbit within which his body

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[259] Amin Kamil was a poet, short story writer, and novelist from South Kashmir.
[260] Amin Kamil, "The Shadow and the Substance," in *Kath: Stories from Kashmir*, compiled by Neerja Mattoo (Delhi: Sahikya Akedemi: 2011) 37-43.
[261] Kamil, "The Shadow and the Substance," 38.

began to move."[262] He follows the man into a restaurant full of officials, lawyers, teachers, poets, and communists; Manohar claims that many of them had also been subject to his surveillance. The man leaves the restaurant and receives a packet from another man on the street, who urges him to relax and go home. Manohar overhears the man he was following reply that people like him are never meant to relax with their families. Manohar becomes suspicious and imagines that the man was responsible for setting off the bomb the previous day. He takes the bus home with the man, and follows him to his house, where an old woman asks the man if he has brought home medicine for his sick wife. The man laments that he has received money from someone, but has not gotten the medicine. As the man starts to leave the house again, Manohar begins to feel embarrassed running after the man, but then hears the old woman admonish him, "Why was I telling you that day that you should not take up a job with this Special Staff? But you thought you had hit upon a fortune!"[263] Manohar, understandably, is shocked; the man he has been following was a shadow himself. At the end of the story, he asserts: "This town is full of Shadows."

The previous chapter showcased how early postcolonial Kashmiri writers and poets reflected on the political precariousness of the early postcolonial period in their short stories, novels, and poems, ranging from their disappointment in the political leadership to the dilemmas individuals faced in attempting to navigate their place in the new order. In addition to these concerns, a number of writers, including Akthar Mohiuddin and Amin Kamil, also wrote of political repression in this period. As Kamil's short story suggests, both the Government of India and the state government had established their own rigorous systems of surveillance, which included informers and multiple intelligence agencies. Manohar's tale highlights how

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[262] Ibid.
[263] Kamil, "The Shadow and the Substance," 42.

everyone—including government employees—came within the states' "orbit of surveillance." Kamil's short story serves as an important account of the intrusiveness of the state in society, to the extent that one "shadow" ends up unintentionally orbiting around another "shadow."

In the previous chapters, I examined how Bakshi's rule was marked by economic, educational, and cultural reform and the various ends towards which these policies were put to use and their often conflicting consequences. Concurrent to this progressive reform project was a policy of political repression, one that undermined the purported ideals of Naya Kashmir. Post-partition dissent against the Kashmiri state had emerged under Sheikh Abdullah, with those who contested the state's accession to India, and others—especially in Jammu—who wanted the state to further integrate with India. Many of the individuals who opposed the accession were supporters of the Muslim Conference, and the Sheikh exiled them to Pakistan. Thus, political repression certainly did not begin under Bakshi. Both the Dogra and Sheikh Abdullah's governments were also politically repressive, and Bakshi drew upon a number of existing repressive strategies, and expanded them after Sheikh Abdullah's arrest. After the Sheikh's arrest, in addition to those who opposed Kashmir's accession to India, dissent under Bakshi also featured those who now turned to the Sheikh as the symbol for Kashmiri self-determination, or plebiscite, or greater autonomy. Thus, politically repressing these voices was integral to the consolidation of Naya Kashmir, which sought legitimacy for the new government and Kashmir's accession to India. At the same time the state government was building schools and distributing rice at lower prices, it was also arresting and targeting those who were pro-Sheikh or pro-Pakistan. Nonetheless, it is under Bakshi that a popular and organized post-Partition indigenous resistance—which had its roots in the Sheikh period—to Kashmir's political developments emerged.

This chapter seeks to examine the repressive practices of the state government as well as the scope for dissent and political activity under Bakshi, and the interplay between the two. How do we understand the nature of state repression in the early postcolonial period? How did political actors dissent in an age of state repression? What did dissent entail in the context of the political developments in Kashmir? And most importantly, how did repression impact the aims of Naya Kashmir? This chapter contributes to the argument of the broader dissertation with its focus on the agency of the local state and the internal dynamics within the state, as well as its focus on how the local state consolidated its authority. I argue that repression was primarily a purview of the state government, and dissent, in turn, revolved around a set of local concerns and rivalries. The presence of both amounted to an enduring state of emergency under Naya Kashmir, ultimately undermining the progressive state building project.

This chapter is divided into six sections. In the first, I turn to the formal and informal structures of state repression, highlighting the state of emergency that was to define Kashmir's post-Partition reality. This included formal and informal militias and intelligence networks, emergency laws, restrictions on freedom of expression and press, and strategies of accommodation. The next two sections explore the emergence of two organized resistance movements against the Kashmiri state: the Political Conference, led by Ghulam Mohiuddin Karra and the Plebiscite Front, led by Mirza Afzal Beg and, indirectly, Sheikh Abdullah. These two organizations served as the primary source of opposition within Kashmir at the time. Using the recently published memoirs of a prominent leader in the Plebiscite Front as well as a number of additional autobiographies, oral histories, and reports, I will discuss the ideologies behind both of these groups, the relationship between the two parties and the state, and the reasons why both groups failed in their political objectives. In the fourth section, I discuss how prominent party

workers from both groups were tried and imprisoned during the Kashmir Conspiracy Case (1958). The sixth section discusses the reasons why the Plebiscite Front was accommodated once again into the National Conference. I conclude by suggesting that the interplay between dissent and repression had two primary effects: while it effectively neutralized the primary political parties that operated in this period, it also mobilized an entire generation of Kashmiris that became politically invested in the demand for a right to self-determination.

Bakshi's Inheritance

On the level of political freedoms, the Naya Kashmir manifesto had been resolutely progressive. "For the purpose of promoting political awakening, and strengthening the national resurgence," the manifesto guaranteed freedom of speech, assembly, press, and demonstrations.[264] It also allowed for citizens to join any variety of political and cultural organizations. In providing for equal protection under the law, the plan stated, "no citizen may be arrested or detained except by decision of a Court of Law or by the sanction of the Advocate-General."[265] It also protected the private property and correspondence of its citizens. Perhaps no other aspect of the manifesto was as undermined, however, as the sections that guaranteed political freedoms, emphasizing once more how Kashmir's "disputed" status undermined the aims of Naya Kashmir.

Charles Davenport defines repression as "government regulatory action directed against those who challenge existing power relationships."[266] These regulatory actions vary and include a variety of overt and covert, violent and nonviolent, and state and state-sponsored actions. They include harassment of opposition leaders, firing of government employees, restrictions on civil

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264 *New Kashmir*, 13.
265 Ibid.
266 Charles Davenport, "The weight of the past: Exploring lagged determinants of political repression," *Political Research Quarterly*, 49, 2, (1996) 377–403.

liberties, suspension of *habeas corpus,* censorship of press, banning of political parties, and limitations on associations, gatherings and speech. Other repressive tactics include state-sponsored militias, death squads, torture, disappearances, mass killings, policing and violence against protestors, prevalence of informants/intelligence agencies, and imprisoning and exiling dissidents. Some states also rely on strategies of accommodation that involve efforts to negotiate with the opposition, release political prisoners, and co-opt the opposition into the current political system. Bakshi's government relied upon most of these tactics to control dissent in the aftermath of Sheikh Abdullah's arrest, highlighting the varying types of dissent the state encountered. While I have earlier discussed the series of arrests and deaths that occurred at the hands of the state forces in the few weeks after Sheikh Abdullah's arrest, I argue below that state repression was integral to upholding Bakshi's government, and how it surpassed practices of repression in the Dogra period.

Although the state faced dissent from varying ideological, regional and religious groups, "political" dissidents in this period were primarily those who contested the finality of the state's accession to India and wanted a plebiscite held in the state. Other dissidents included individuals or groups in Jammu and Ladakh who wanted greater regional autonomy within the state or further integration with India, leftist or communist groups and trade unions that were opposed to the unequal distribution of wealth and power under Bakshi, Pandit groups—both inside and outside the state—that contested what they perceived as the state's increasing discrimination against their community, and Muslim religious bodies, such as the Jamaat-i-Islam, that were not only pro-Pakistan, but also challenged the secular ideals of Naya Kashmir, and the state government.

However, it is important to note that Sheikh Abdullah and a number of his loyalists

represented the primary architects of dissent at this time. Although the Sheikh later shifted his stance to be more accommodating with the Indian leadership, in the fifties and the early sixties, the Sheikh was *the* staunch proponent of Kashmiri self-determination in the face of Government of India and Kashmiri local state coercion. Even from behind bars, the Sheikh managed to direct the opposition leadership, and gain the sympathies of most Kashmiris, as he had at the collapse of Dogra rule. The events surrounding his removal from power had given him a moral authority from which to mobilize the masses on the issue of plebiscite. As a result, many of the repressive measures of the Bakshi government specifically targeted Sheikh Abdullah and his supporters.

The Dogra states' security apparatus had primarily targeted the leadership of the National Conference; however, in its waning days it also arrested political workers who were pro-Pakistan or opposed the state's accession to India, "long before the tribesmen entered Kashmir".[267] Under Sheikh Abdullah's Emergency Administration, the target of the state's repressive policies were primarily those individuals or groups who were purported to be pro-Pakistan or rejected the state's accession to India. Scholars who see this early post-Partition period as one in which Sheikh Abdullah enjoyed the full support of the Kashmiri people largely overlook these accounts of repression under Sheikh Abdullah's government.[268] Between 1947-1953, Bakshi himself oversaw internal security concerns as the head of the Home Department and as internal security emergency officer. As a result, a number of brutal practices against dissidents that began in the Emergency Administration continued, and were expanded upon, after August 1953. The state

[267] Prem Nath Bazaz, *Truth About Kashmir* (New Delhi: Kashmir Democratic Union, October 1950) 2.
[268] See, for example, Andrew Whitehead, who in his study of the influence of communists on Sheikh Abdullah's government, and the emergence of a "people's militia," does not address the tactics of the National Conference and the Peace Brigade in suppressing dissent. Andrew Whitehead, "The People's Militia: Communist and Kashmiri Nationalism in the 1940s," *Twentieth Century Communism*, 2, (2010) 141-168.

spent a significant part of its budget on police and intelligence. Under Bakshi, Jammu and Kashmir was ranked first in the country in terms of expenditure per citizen on the police.[269]

The first of these repressive practices was the creation of a rag-tag group of National Conference workers called the Peace Brigade, a militia that was dispatched to local neighborhoods, especially those that were deemed pro-Pakistan. Sheikh Abdullah's administration had formed the Peace Brigade, and ironically after his arrest, its members went after those who supported him. Munshi Ishaq, who was an Emergency Officer in the district of Budgam under the Sheikh, and later became one of the founding members of the Plebiscite Front, wrote in his memoirs that the Peace Brigade took the "law and order system in their hands and spread the network of hooliganism and terrorism in villages and cities…The police department also came under them."[270] Ishaq's characterization of the Peace Brigade differs from that of Andrew Whitehead, who, while arguing that the "militia's task was to protect the Kashmiri capital from the Pakistani invaders, and in so doing it buttressed Kashmir's accession to India," posits it solely as defending Kashmir.[271] Whitehead's account does not address the coercive role the militia played in buttressing the accession and suppressing those who were against it.

When Bakshi came to power, he took control of the Peace Brigade, which now worked with an extensive intelligence network in areas that appeared to have anti-Indian or anti-Bakshi sentiments. Oftentimes in plain clothes, they would attack or harass those in the opposition, and imprison and torture those suspected of dissent, using mainly "their muscles and canes."[272] Their

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[269]David H.Bayley, *The Police and Political Development in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015) 67-69.
[270] Munshi Mohammad Ishaq, *Nida-i-Haq*. Munshi Ghulam Hasan (ed), Published diaries and memoir of Munshi Mohammad Ishaq (2014) 192.
[271] Whitehead, "A People's Militia," 155-158.
[272] Bilal Handoo, "Ikhwanis of the Yore?" *Kashmir Life*, 21 July, 2014. To be accessed here: http://www.kashmirlife.net/ikhwanis-of-the-yore-issue20-vol06-62400/, Date of Access: 16 Aug. 2016.

heavy-handed tactics gained them notoriety; they were known to put hot potatoes in the mouths of opponents, heavy stones on their chests, and brand them with hot irons.[273] They were also accused of molesting women.[274] Ishaq recalled how they would also tie Pakistan supporters with grass rope and hold them in their headquarters.[275] The Peace Brigade came to be known in local parlance as "khuftan faqirs," or late night beggars, as they would parade around Srinagar city after the last prayer of the day, *khuftan* in Kashmiri.[276] The level of suppression was such that individuals were arrested or beaten if an informant discovered anyone listening to Radio Pakistan or Radio Azad Kashmir. The Peace Brigade, as well as a number of other police and home guard units, worked in tandem with Ghulam Qadir Ganderbali, the Superintendent of Police in Srinagar. Gandarbali was a close associate of Bakshi's, known for his brutal use of torture, and his control over the security apparatus. He oversaw the Kothi Bagh Police Station in the heart of the city, where a number of political prisoners were detained. Eventually, the Peace Brigade was disbanded and its members were adjusted into the Central Intelligence Department.[277] In addition to the Peace Brigade, the local police force, as well as the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the Indian army were in operation in Kashmir. Furthermore, a separate government militia made up primarily of Bakshi's followers and NC workers, who were known as the *goggas,* were also operative in the city, and were given contracts and lucrative positions. The *goggas* were each in charge of particular neighborhoods, and were tasked with identifying local issues and individuals who were suspect. In essence, they formed a parallel mode of surveillance for Bakshi. Given the restrictions on archival research on Kashmir at the National Archives of India, it is difficult to ascertain to what extent, and how, the Government of India was directly involved

[273] Syed Mir Qasim, *My Life and Times* (Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1992) 82.
[274] Nandita Haksar, *The Many Faces of Kashmiri Nationalism* (New Delhi: Speaking Tiger Books, 2015) 38.
[275] Munshi Ishaq, *Nida-i-Haq*, 192.
[276] Bilal Handoo, "Ikhwanis of the Yore?"
[277] Ibid.

in managing dissent at this time. What we can gather given the limited access to sources is that the central government had its own intelligence agencies—that were spying on the broader society and the Kashmiri leadership—as well as armed police check posts in the region to "tackle large scale attempt at infiltration, subversion, sabotage, and political conspiracy."[278]

What is significant, then, is that much of the work of suppressing dissent was left to the local Kashmiri state leadership, which at times was a cause of discomfort for some in the Indian leadership. This brings our attention, once more, to the agentive role of the state government in formulating and executing state policy. The Government of India was aware of the activities of the Peace Brigade and the other local militias; during a visit to Kashmir, Govind Ballabh Pant, who was then the Indian Home Minister, asked Bakshi about the Peace Brigade, and whether their activities included breaking up public meetings of Bakshi's opponents. According to Mir Qasim, the former Chief Minister and member of Bakshi's cabinet, "Bakshi tried to play it down saying it was a band of a very few and unarmed persons…[in response] Pant said that one goonda can make a thousand men's life miserable."[279] Despite the Government of India's presumed discomfort at the methods used to curb the opposition, there was little it could do, given that Bakshi had been given free reign to deal with dissent. Indeed, Balraj Puri, a journalist and writer from Jammu recalled his correspondence with Prime Minister Nehru, who "agreed that Bakshi was an extremely unsavory individual, but 'argued that India's case [on Kashmir] now revolved around him and so despite all its shortcomings, the Bakshi government had to be strengthened.' Puri quotes Nehru as saying that Kashmir's politics 'revolved around personalities,' and hence 'there was no material for democracy there.' "[280]

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[278] B.N. Mullick *My Years with Nehru: Kashmir (*Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1971) 56.
[279] Syed Mir Qasim*, My Life and Times*, 77.
[280] Sumantra Bose, *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace* (New Delhi: Vistaar Publications, 2003) 72.

In addition to the numerous intelligence and security agencies, a series of draconian laws were also enforced to criminalize political dissent. In 1954, the Supreme Court of India's jurisdiction was extended to Kashmir as a means of further integration. That meant that the fundamental rights of citizens guaranteed by India's constitution were to apply in the region; however, as Sumantra Bose argues, "these civil liberties could be suspended at any time at the discretion of [Kashmiri] authorities in the interest of 'security,' and no judicial reviews of the suspensions would be allowed. In effect, this was carte blanche for the operation of a draconian police state in [Kashmir]."[281] The Public Security Act allowed for the confiscation and requisition of any property. The Preventive Detention Act (PDA) allowed the police to detain suspects without a trial for a maximum period of ten years.[282] This law was used to arrest a number of political activists. The Enemy Agents Ordinance, which was introduced by Bakshi in 1948, arrested and tried those who were suspected of pro-Pakistan leanings, resulting in the death penalty.[283] Public meetings and processions, unless they were in support of the ruling party, were not allowed under Article 50 of the Defense of India Rules.[284] The Ingress and Egress Act pushed back to the other side of the ceasefire line any undesirable resident of the state.[285] Various regulations under the Defense of India Rules were also promulgated during the Indo-China war of 1962; a number of Kashmiri leaders, including Sheikh Abdullah, were held without trial under these Rules.[286] In addition, some government affiliated individuals lost their jobs for speaking out against the state.[287]

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281 Bose, *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict,* 69.
282 Mridula Sarabhai, *Call for Impartial Inquiry: pre and post Hazratbal incident* (New Delhi: 1958) 74.
283 Prem Nath Bazaz, *The Shape of Things in Kashmir* (Delhi: Pamposh Publications, 1965) 13.
284 Ibid. See also Mohammad Sheikh Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar: An Autobiography*: translated from the Urdu by Mohammad Amin (Srinagar: Gulshan Publishers, 2013) 462.
285 *The Kashmir Conpiracy Case*, Report 7: Mohiuddin Shawl (Srinagar, Legal Defense Committee, 1964) 58.
286 David E Lockwood, "Sheikh Abdullah and the Politics of Kashmir," *Asian Survey*, 9, 5 (May 1969) 384. Lockwood argues that the enforcement of the Defense of India Rules as a result of the Indo-Chinese War caused a huge debate in the Indian Parliament surrounding the state of emergency. Critics of the law complained that it would

State repression also extended to the freedom of press and expression. The press, which had always been undermined in Kashmir, suffered a significant setback under Bakshi. Prior to 1931, no newspapers were allowed to publish in Kashmir. As a result of the agitations of that year, the Maharaja had to make a number of concessions to his subjects. One was to allow the publication of newspapers. In 1947, there were nearly fifty papers that were published either in Srinagar or Jammu, of varying political perspectives, many of them critical of the Dogras.[288] Once Sheikh Abdullah and the National Conference came to power, most of these papers were censored or forced to suspend publication. Bakshi's government also continued the policy of Sheikh Abdullah's administration to prohibit newspapers that were deemed pro-Pakistan or disputed Kashmir's accession to India. Only papers that supported Kashmir's accession to India as final were permitted to publish or distributed within the state. Many received financial benefits. The Department of Information gave financial assistance to a number of local papers through the form of advertisements. G.M. Sadiq, the Education and Information Minister, sent a letter to press correspondents in the state, highlighting the government's desire to maintain close relations with the press "towards the betterment of the state."[289]

The department kept a close watch on the handful of papers that were allowed in the

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undermine India's reputation as a free and democratic country, while those who were in favor of the continuation of the emergency regulations and Abdullah's detention (which included Hindu communal parties) argued that they were needed to ensure the country's sovereignty. After the Rules expired in January 1968, the Indian Parliament passed the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act on December 20, 1967. Lockwood suggests that the Act was partly passed in order to pacify those who supported the State of Emergency. As Lockwood details, "this bill has given the authorities sweeping powers to imprison anyone found guilty of questioning India's sovereignty over territory to which it has established official claim." (385) This meant that Kashmiri opposition leaders who contested the accession could be held under this law.

[287] Qari Saifuddin and Saad Uddin, two leaders of the Jamaat in Islam, were asked to leave their teaching positions because of their criticism of the state in their speeches. They resigned from the government school and focused on developing more Jamaat schools. See Qari Saifuddin, *Vadi-i-Purkhar, (*Srinagar: Markazi Maktaba Jama'at-i-Islami Jammu and Kashmir, 1980) 51.

[288] Prem Nath Bazaz, *Does India Defend Freedom or Fascism in Kashmir?* (New Delhi: Kashmir Democratic Union, June 1952) 4.

[289] "Correspondence of the Information Minister with Press Correspondents Regarding Close Contact with the Press," File 152 NF/C-35/55, 1955, Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.

state, ensuring that their content did not go against permissible discourse. The approved publications, including *The Daily Khidmat,* were only allowed to give official versions of alleged oppositional activities.[290] If they didn't, writers, editors, and publishers were punished—some had their papers banned and others faced arrest. In one case, the director of the Department of Information, J.N. Zutshi, sent a letter to Shri G.K Nair, who was the legal advisor to the government. In the letter, Zutshi asked whether the government could take action against the paper *Sach*, of Jammu, which was edited by Shri Roshan. He noted that Shri Roshan "is hostile to present government…supports [Sheikh] Abdullah's stand for plebiscite to determine future of the state. Thus, the paper has been toeing the line of those elements, which aim at creating chaos and confusion in the state."[291] Yet, under the current Press and Publication Act (which was a remnant of the Dogra period), Zutshi stated that no action could be taken against the editor. He proposed that some amendments should be made to the act to punish those whose writings oppose the state's accession to India. After discussing the matter with Bakshi, Nair responded that the Prime Minister had approved the amendment and removed *Sach* from the list of approved publications in the state. Paradoxically, while newspapers were heavily censored within Kashmir, Kashmiri dissidents who lived in Delhi and elsewhere were able to publish papers that were critical of the government. Prem Nath Bazaz, who lived in Delhi, and a number of exiled Political Conference workers, published their own papers in Delhi, including the Urdu weeklies *Johaar, Payam Nau, Nawa-i-Muslim*, and *The Free Thinker.*[292]

Freedom of expression was also denied in schools and colleges. In their recollections, a number of Kashmiris who attended school during the Bakshi period narrated how there was a

[290] Sarabhai, *Call for Impartial Inquiry,* 78.
[291] "Action Against the *Sach*, Jammu Under the Press and Publication Act 1989," File 71, 1955, Department of Information, Srinagar State Archives.
[292] Abdul Jabbar Gockhami, *Kashmir: Politics and Plebiscite, 1955–1975* (Srinagar: Gulshan Books, 2011) 118.

concerted effort to suppress any unfavorable—namely pro-Pakistan and pro-plebiscite, perspectives. Ghulam Hassan Shah, a former Indian Administrative Services officer, says that there were a number of Central Intelligence Department (CID) officers in the schools and colleges, and as a result, the students were not able to talk freely about politics or current affairs. If any of the students were suspected of favoring Pakistan, they would be questioned and harassed by the CID.[293] Furthermore, the various colleges' magazines were careful not to publish any articles that contested the state's version of recent Kashmiri history. There was no open environment of debate and discussion surrounding the accession or Kashmir's political future. Anti-Indian content was not allowed, and neither were books, magazines, or newspapers that challenged state ideology.[294] The situation in the all-girls institutions was similar. Nighat Shafi Pandit recalls how in the Women's College, under the leadership of Miss Mehmooda, students were not allowed to even utter the word "Pakistan."[295]

A number of the draconian laws, including the Public Security Act, were remnants from the Dogra period. However, the level of suppression during the Bakshi period surpassed that of the Dogras in the pre-1947 period, and went explicitly against the goals of the manifesto. During the later part of Dogra rule, various political parties, including the National Conference, Muslim Conference, Kisan Mazdoor Conference, and the Kashmir Socialist Party could hold public meetings and annual conferences. Members of these parties, such as the Muslim Conference, even fought and won elections. In addition, there was more restriction on the press under Bakshi than under the Dogras, who allowed papers of opposition parties to publish. Kashmiris living outside of the region, even in India, had more freedom to publish papers of varying perspectives than their counterparts in the region, suggesting once again that the local state was at the

[293] Interview with Author, Ghulam Hassan Shah, Srinagar, 12 Jun. 2014.
[294] Ibid.
[295] Interview with Author, Nighat Shafi Pandit, Srinagar, 5 May. 2014.

forefront of suppression.

From the perspective of the government, the laws were crucial to maintaining law and order and checking "disruptive elements" which had emerged in the wake of the accession to India, and later, Sheikh Abdullah's arrest.[296] These laws served as a means through which the government could curb dissent, but were also an integral part of the organization of state violence and repression. As a result, the state enacted a rule by law—in which the legal form was used to cloak arbitrary power—instead of a rule of law, which, as Rueban Balasubramaniam argues in the case of more contemporary cases of indefinite detention, contrasts with arbitrary power.[297] In doing so, institutions of ordinary politics—which included the courts and the legislative bodies—were vehicles for the arbitrary exercise of emergency powers. This allowed Bakshi to violate fundamental rights, and shape the legal landscape of the state under the pretense of addressing a crisis.

Parallel to the legal suppression, dissidents also accused state authorities of using extralegal strategies in order to coerce opposition activists into submission. Munshi Ishaq described how his neighborhood received discriminatory treatment as a result of his political activities. The construction of a road was stopped from his house to the main market in the area.[298] In addition, others accused the state of using strategies of accommodation, which sought to negotiate with or co-opt the opposition. Qari Saifuddin, who was one of the main leaders of the Jamaat-i-Islam, described in his autobiography how officials in the Central Intelligence Department attempted to bribe him to work on their behalf:

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[296] Dina Nath Mahajan and Mohammad Ayub Khan, *Kashmir: An Integral Part of India*, Published by S Kulbir Singh, Secretary, Provincial National Conference, Jammu (New Delhi: Caxton Press Private Limited) 9.
[297] Rueban Balasubramaniam, "Indefinite Detention: Rule by Law or Rule of Law," in Victor Ramraj (ed), *Emergency and the Limits of Legality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 119.
[298] Munshi Ishaq, *Nida-i-Haq*, 266.

> One day a senior CID Officer came from Delhi and wanted to meet with me. The messenger was my Hindu student. I accepted the meeting with him on my student's request. The officer was trying to convince me with his sweet flattery that I secretly work for him while living in the party, and secretly inform him about the Jamaat-I-Islams' work…So that they will gave me valuable compensation as reward. I refused…and he became very insistent, after this long discussion the Officer became angry….Time to time they were trying to buy our other comrades with different methods…but by the Grace of Allah no one trapped in this web of wealth.[299]

As we will see below, accommodation was used against arrested workers of the Political Conference and the Plebiscite Front, and was one of the primary ways in which the state managed to neutralize the oppositional political leadership.

The repressiveness of the state's policies towards its dissidents unleashed what Prem Nath Bazaz, a writer who had previously been a member of the National Conference, but later grew disillusioned with its increasing authoritarianism, referred to as a "reign of terror" on his visit to Kashmir in the mid 1960s. A state of emergency had become the new normal. These actions, he argued, led to a "complete alienation from India and a yearning for Pakistan…. Repression can't keep away Kashmiri Muslims from their pro-Pakistan predilections. "[300] He continued that it was *only because of persecution*, that Kashmiri Muslims wanted Pakistan, as the government was unable to win them over.[301] Bazaz's perspective concurs with the role that Zutshi argues repression played under Sheikh Abdullah's government—under both Bakshi and the Sheikh, heightened repression solidified anti-Indian sentiments and resulted in the desire for

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[299] Qari Saifuddin, *Vadi-i-Purkhar,* 28.

[300] Prem Nath Bazaz, *A Last Chance for India in Kashmir (*New Delhi: Pamposh Publications) 3. Bazaz, a Kashmiri Pandit, was a former National Conference leader who worked with Sheikh Abdullah, and was seen as one of the primary influences on the Sheikh for converting the Muslim Conference to the National Conference. After seeing the increasing repression of the NC leadership and its close alliance with the Indian National Congress, he left the party and began the Kisan Mazdoor Conference, which was a pro-plebiscite party, with leanings towards Pakistan. Under the NC leadership, he was exiled to Delhi for his political activities and a number of party members were arrested. Abdul Salam Yatu, who was the president of the party, was exiled to Pakistan. From Delhi, Bazaz published a series of pamphlets on the political intrigues happening in the state, all the while calling for a plebiscite. In 1964, he visited Kashmir and wrote in *A Last Chance* about the Bakshi period.

[301] Bazaz, *A Last Chance*, 10.

a different political arrangement. From the perspective of the state government, however, it appeared that repression was required in order to uphold the *present* political arrangement.

Bazaz, Saifuddin, and Ishaq represented three varying trends of dissent under Bakshi. Bazaz was a Kashmiri Pandit who had played a prominent role in forming the National Conference, and stood for an inclusive Kashmiri national project that included both Pandits and Muslims. After losing favor with Sheikh Abdullah, he was exiled to New Delhi, where he ran a number of papers that criticized the Kashmir state and called for a plebiscite in the region. Ishaq was a former National Conference worker who was increasingly growing disillusioned with the party and would come to serve as one of the founding members of the Plebiscite Front. And finally, Saifuddin represented one of the primary Muslim religious organizations in the state. Despite their varying backgrounds, all three provided a similar assessment of the extralegal tactics of the Bakshi government in harassing and accommodating its opponents, underlining the extent to which the state was repressive. Bazaz's comments regarding Kashmiri Muslims predilections for Pakistan are also important to note. Instead of suggesting that Kashmiri Muslims had a primordial attachment to Pakistan as a result of their shared religious backgrounds with the citizens of the new state, he suggests that this affinity arose "only because of persecution." Paradoxically, according to Bazaz, the state *had* to use repressive tactics to secure the accession, but it was these very tactics that undermined the legitimacy of the state, as Kashmiris began to "yearn for Pakistan." I suggest that the "yearning" was as a result of the terms of the plebiscite itself, given that the only two options were to join India or Pakistan. It was not because Pakistan was the "obvious" choice. In a way, these terms restricted the range of political possibility in Kashmir, demarcating a division that was along religious lines. Locally, however, dissent was more complicated, as a result of local rivalries and concerns, and did not

neatly fit into a "pro-Pakistan" mold. As we will see below, the restricted range of political possibility inhibited the nature of dissent, as both of the primary oppositional political parties—the Political Conference and the Plebiscite Front—were unable to articulate a clear plan.

Political Dissent

There were two primary political parties that came to prominence during Bakshi's rule. Primary source material, such as meeting minutes, press statements, or correspondence, from each party is difficult to obtain as its members claim that the material was taken in police raids or was destroyed or stolen when they faced imprisonment. Nonetheless, a complicated story of intrigue and betrayal surfaces when examining a number of accounts that are available. Since the previous opposition political leadership (mostly members of the Muslim Conference during the Sheikh's Emergency Administration) had either been arrested or exiled to Pakistan, it is important to note that the members of the Political Conference and the Plebiscite Front primarily consisted of former National Conference supporters who had grown disillusioned with the authoritarian practices of the party. Many also became wary of what they perceived as the Government of India's increasing interference in Kashmir's affairs and it's backtracking on promises of autonomy. These individuals had played a pivotal role either as leaders in the struggle against Dogra rule or in the Sheikh's government as ministers, administrators, and educators. They included members like Sofi Mohammed Akbar, who had previously signed arrests warrants in the area of Baramulla against those who were pro-Pakistan.[302] In many ways, then, these individuals had much more in common with those who were in power in terms of their background in the Kashmiri freedom struggle against the Dogras and their commitment to an inclusive form of Kashmiri nationalism. Thus, the political opposition did not necessarily seek to create a particularly different *kind* of state in this period, but rather sought to assert a right to

[302] Interview with Author, Anwar Ashai, Srinagar, 21 Feb. 2014.

self-determination. What "self-determination" would specifically entail was left vague, although both the parties, as we will see below, led people to believe they were presumably in favor of Pakistan. Furthermore, their commitment to secular ideals did not preclude them from instrumentalizing religion and making appeals to Muslim identity from time to time. The story of the rise and fall of these two organizations sheds light on the difficulty of organizing a coherent opposition to the state.

Political Conference

In the new political landscape, the Political Conference was the first group that emerged to contest Kashmir's accession to India.[303] Ghulam Mohiuddin Karra, who was previously associated with the communist wing of the National Conference, founded the group in June 1953, just a few months before Sheikh Abdullah's arrest. Even as a communist, Karra vacillated towards Pakistan.[304] The Political Conference, while calling for the right to self-determination was explicitly a pro-Pakistan organization.[305] A poster of the Political Conference listed the following commitments: withdrawal of forces, immediate and free conduct of plebiscite, long live Pakistan, constitutional struggle, aversion to subversion and friendship with welfare, fraternity, and world peace.[306] The organization rejected violence and coercion as a method of protest, but its members were asked to be willing to "lie on embers for the protection of the right of self-determination."[307]

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[303] Under the Emergency Administration, those contesting the accession were the Muslim Conference, the Kisan Mazdoor Conference and the Socialist Party. A majority of the Muslim Conference leadership had been exiled to Pakistan, many of them leading the Azad Kashmir government, while Prem Nath Bazaz of the Kisan Mazdoor Conference, was exiled to Delhi. See Jagan Nath Sathu, *Beyond the Iron Curtain in Kashmir* (New Delhi: Kashmir Democratic Union, January 1952).
[304] Prem Nath Bazaz, *Rise of Communism in Kashmir* (New Delhi, Kashmir Democratic Union, August 1952) 7.
[305] Lockwood, "Sheikh Abdullah and the Politics of Kashmir," 387.
[306] Gockhami, *Kashmir: Politics and Plebiscite,* 112.
[307] Ibid, 113.

My insight into the workings of the Political Conference are based on an interview with Pirzada Hafizullah Makhdoomi, a former Political Conference worker and secretary general of the Working Committee, as well as a number of secondary sources. Makhdoomi came from a *pir* family in the Khanaqah area of the Old City. He entered Amar Singh College in 1952 where he grew interested in politics. He served as the college secretary for the National Conference. A curious student, he went to the state's Constituent Assembly, which at the time was filled with National Conference loyalists, to watch the proceedings and realized that they were "dumb driven cattle. People would just support the leader (Sheikh Abdullah). There were no elections, no contest."[308] After his visit, his earlier support of the National Conference waned, suggesting that it was the ways in which the party operated that individuals like Makhdoomi increasingly became disillusioned with. Alongside other students at Amar Singh College he started to hold meetings and agitations on the school grounds. Members of the Political Conference became aware of the activities of these students and recruited them into their group. Although Makhdoomi came from a religious family, when asked what motivated him to join the Political Conference, he emphasized that the basic issue was the right of self-determination. His own interpretation of the two-nation theory was that Pakistan was founded to protect the political rights of Muslims, and ensure that they had equal rights and representation and were not relegated to the status of "minorities." It was "not because of Islam," he stated, which I interpreted to mean that it was not to create an "Islamic state," but rather a "state for Muslims."

There is some dispute over the origins of the Political Conference. While Makhdoomi claimed that Karra was a sincere activist, Sheikh Abdullah's autobiography suggested a different account, one that is also corroborated by B.N. Mullick, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. The Sheikh narrated how Karra wanted a cabinet position in his administration, but he

[308] Interview with Author, Pirzada Hafizullah Makhdoomi, Srinagar, 17 Nov. 2013.

gave the position to G.M. Sadiq. In defiance, Karra left the National Conference to set up the Political Conference. After establishing close contacts with Pakistan, he received funding to run his political activities in the Valley.[309] B.N. Mullick also contended that the Political Conference stood for direct accession to Pakistan and received funding from them.

Whatever the impetus behind the Political Conference's founding, it appeared to gain resonance with thousands of people, especially in Srinagar. The Political Conference's first main event was a large procession held in the Old City, on June 19th, 1953, which Makhdoomi claimed had nearly one hundred thousand people in attendance. Referring to the first procession, Makhdoomi recalled, "It was held in Nawa Kadal, the leader [Karra] came out and asked the people what they stand for, the people all said Pakistan."[310] As the procession started moving towards Lal Chowk, people began to throw stones at the Indian army vehicles. Munshi Ishaq remembered that the "city was echoing with the slogan of 'Long Live Pakistan.' The Flags of the National Conference had been torn to shreds."[311] Soon after, the Kashmir Cabinet banned the party and placed its leaders in jail.[312] Makhdoomi was in jail with Karra for many years. He remembered specifically how Karra had switched from his communist viewpoints towards "becoming more religious," perhaps suggesting that a religious nationalism was soon to gain ground, as leftists or communists began to lose their ideological spark.

The Political Conference's founding members and Working Committee members consisted of a number of well-known educated Kashmiris, including some Kashmiri Pandits. Pandit Rughonath Vaishnavi, a lawyer, served as Vice-President of the organization. Vaishnavi

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[309] Sheikh Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar*, 324. Some analysts claim that it was Bakshi Ghulam Muhammed himself who instigated Karra to begin the Political Conference, so that the Sheikh could be undermined in the eyes of New Delhi and Bakshi would be able to gain more power in Kashmir. See Gockhami, *Kashmir: Politics and Plebiscite*, 35.
[310] Interview with Author, Pirzada Hafizullah Makhdoomi.
[311] Munshi Ishaq, *Nida-i-Haq,* 248.
[312] Sadiq Ali and Madhu Limaye, "Report on Kashmir: A Praja Socialist Publication" (February 1954) 10.

had received his legal training from Allahabad University and returned to Kashmir in 1938. He was nominated as a member of the National Conference's Working Committee in 1941. As with other members, he soon grew disenchanted with the organization due to its violent suppression of dissent, and resigned from the party, worried that it wanted to "hold the reins of absolute power to their heart's content."[313] In 1952, Vaishnavi's weekly Urdu newspaper, *Jamhoor* was banned, and he joined forces with Karra to become one of the founding members of the Political Conference. In his unpublished memoirs, he wrote "it was clear that Kashmiris had been 'relegated to the position of slaves' after India gained it's independence."[314]

As a Kashmiri Pandit who was a member of a pro-Pakistan organization, Vaishvani was subject to taunts from individuals who called him "Pakistani batta" or Pakistani Kashmiri Pandit.[315] Yet, for Vaishnavi, his support was not for Pakistan, per say, but in respect of the views of a majority of the region's inhabitants, who he believed had the democratic right to determine their future. Perhaps, as it was for Makhdoomi, Pakistan was not an "Islamic state," in the way that term is deployed today in terms of a religious theocracy, as much as it was a state that was protecting the rights of the subcontinent's Muslims. This suggests that alliances across religious communities were a part of the political culture at the time, despite the tensions that existed.

Vaishnavi and the other leaders of the Political Conference sent letters to the United Nations Security Council as well as the Government of India. They raised the issue of the lack of civil liberties in the state, rampant police rule, the presence of the armed forces, political

[313] Mona Bhan, "How Rughonath Vaishnavi's Life and Biography Can Provide Important Glimpses into the Political Culture of Kashmir from the 1930s until the 1990s," Self-Published Pamphlet (2016).
[314] Bhan, "Rughonath Vaishnavi," 6.
[315] Bhan, "Rughonath Vaishnavi," 9.

prisoners, as well as the issue of plebiscite.[316] They met with news agencies, both Indian and international. Political Conference leaders would keep a close account of upcoming political delegations that were coming to India, and would write to various international bodies. Some of these communications, however, were returned to the headquarters of the party without being delivered.[317] As for their funding, the state accused the organization of obtaining funds from Pakistan. Makhdoomi denied this allegation, arguing that Karra had a lot of property and didn't need external funding.

In 1960, Makhdoomi was invited to travel to Pakistan and meet the leadership there. He recalled how he became angered in a conversation with a Pakistani leader who complained that Kashmiris "were too cowardly to take to the gun." He reminded the official that the struggle for self-determination was a non-violent one, and that India would completely suppress the armed struggle given its sheer advantage. Due to limited sources on the Political Conference, it is difficult to ascertain what the organization believed would occur after a plebiscite. If the Political Conference declared itself to be for Pakistan, how did they envision Kashmir's relationship with Pakistan? This lack of clarity on the goals of the Political Conference perhaps existed at the time as well, as the influence of the Political Conference eventually declined.

There are a number of reasons for the decline of the Political Conference. Aside from what was perhaps a lack of clarity of its vision, especially in terms of how it viewed Kashmir's relationship with Pakistan, it appears the Political Conferences' leadership could not compete with the increasing influence of the Plebiscite Front. In the 1960s, the Front had the support of Sheikh Abdullah, who was the undisputed leader of the opposition to Bakshi. The membership of the Conference was low. The leadership also faced a crisis between those that were more willing

[316] Gockhami, *Kashmir: Politics and Plebiscite*, 118.
[317] Gockhami, *Kashmir: Politics and Plebiscite*, 116.

to dialogue with the Government of India and those that weren't, a process that was parallel to that in the Plebiscite Front. After the Holy Relic incident, in which a relic of the Prophet Muhammad was stolen from Srinagar's Hazratbal Mosque leading to weeks of unrest in the region in 1963, Karra became involved in the Holy Relic Committee that was formed to recover the relic. The Relic Committee was comprised of Muslim leaders throughout the Valley, many of whom had been affiliated with the Political Conference and the Plebiscite Front. Subsequently, the organization folded. Nonetheless, for many years, the role of the Political Conference was to keep the issue of plebiscite alive, especially in the international and national arena. Furthermore, it was an effort that was committed to non-violence, and gained the support of minorities, not just Kashmir's Muslims.

Plebiscite Front

The second group that emerged, and gained widespread popularity until the mid-seventies was the Plebiscite Front. The Plebiscite Front dominated the political scene in Kashmir from its inception in 1955 to its re-incorporation into the National Conference after the Sheikh-Indira accord of 1975. Mirza Afzal Beg, who had served as a minister in Sheikh Abdullah's administration, and a number of former legislators from the Sheikh's Constituent Assembly, founded the Front in August 1955. Most of them were former National Conference officials or workers. Its members were more closely aligned with Sheikh Abdullah than those who would go onto form the Political Conference whose leader, Ghulam Mohiuddin Karra had personal differences with the Sheikh. Having served time in jail after the Sheikh's arrest, Beg was released on parole for health reasons and became the group's president. On paper, the Plebiscite Front stood for "self-determination through a plebiscite under the UN auspices, withdrawal of the armed forces of both nations from Kashmir, and restoration of civil liberties and free

elections."[318] Admittedly, it viewed the state's accession to India as temporary.[319] It disputed the right of the Constituent Assembly to decide the future of the state in the absence of representatives from Pakistan-administered Kashmir as well as the illegal dismissal and arrest of the Sheikh.[320] Sheikh Abdullah, from jail, was in touch with members of the Plebiscite Front, advising them on their activities, although he was never an official member.

Munshi Ishaq was one of the founding members and a former president of the Plebiscite Front. His son, Munshi Ghulam Hassan, has collected Munshi Ishaq's diaries and published them in the form of a memoir entitled *Nida-i-Haq*. In his writings, Ishaq discusses his family background, as well as his involvement with the Plebiscite Front and political developments in Kashmir from the pre-1947 period until the late 1960's. Much of the text addresses the failures of the Kashmiri state leadership, who he believes looked after their own personal concerns over those of the people, as well as the leadership of the Plebiscite Front, whom he accuses of betraying the cause of self-determination. .

Ishaq came from a prominent Shi'a family in Budgam; his father worked in the Dogra administration. He attended a Christian missionary school, Tyndale Biscoe, and also received training in the Quran, Urdu, and Persian through the Imamia Association, a religious body for Shi'as.[321] Because of his father's illness, Ishaq was unable to go for further education to London. Instead, he began an import and export company, called Kashmir Valley Transport, and sent vehicles to Rawalpindi. As one of the few Muslim businessmen, Ishaq played an important role financially for the National Conferences' struggle against the Dogra rulers and later served as an emergency officer in Budgam under Sheikh Abdullah's administration. In his writings, Ishaq

[318] Bose, *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict,* 73.
[319] Gockhami, *Kashmir: Politics and Plebiscite,* 59.
[320] Roop Krishen Bhat, "The Plebiscite Front: It's Organisation, Strategy and Role in Kashmir's Politics," *Political Science Review* 10.3-4 (1971) 171.
[321] Munshi Ishaq, *Nida-i-Haq,* 42.

claimed that he was not in favor of the accession to India, and was increasingly becoming disillusioned with the repressive politics of the National Conference.[322] When he was called by Beg to become a founding member of the Plebiscite Front, he agreed only because Beg claimed that the party's stance was "accession with Pakistan *on the cloak* of a referendum."[323] Indeed, a number of individuals informed me that Beg and the leadership of the Plebiscite Front let other members and the broader society believe that the Front was pro-Pakistan. Makhdoomi recalled how during their gatherings, they "would raise a green handkerchief and rock salt, both of which was supposed to represent Pakistan," in order to gain favor with the people.[324] Yet, the leadership never explicitly declared that it was pro-Pakistan. The reasons for doing so will be discussed below.

After announcing the launch of the Front, Beg and the rest of the leadership began a membership campaign. Thousands of people "readily accepted the Plebiscite Front…most of the villages, *mohallas*, towns, and cities of the state witnessed a mushroom growth of the Plebiscite Front organization committees."[325] The first convention was held in Sopore, in September 1955. In November of that year, the government rearrested Beg under the Preventive Detention Act. Other conventions and gatherings were held throughout the state and the organization increased its membership. The Front had no socio-economic program; the details of governance would be subject to a post-plebiscite political reality. The primary aim of the organization was to work for a plebiscite in the state.

The organization of the Plebiscite Front was hierarchical and highly centralized. There were committees at the primary, neighborhood, tehsil, district, and provincial levels, in addition

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[322] Munshi Ishaq, *Nida-i-Haq,* 261.
[323] Munshi Ishaq, *Nida-I-Haq*, 267.
[324] Interview with Author, Pirzada Hafizullah Makhdoomi.
[325] Bhat, "The Plebiscite Front."

to a general council and a central committee. Delegates elected presidents for two-year terms. Each unit had to send a monthly report to the central committee of its activities. Given the highly repressive atmosphere in the state, it is difficult to ascertain how many members the organization had at its peak. However, estimates range from 75,000 to 200,000.[326] In addition, the organization worked with a number of labor unions and student groups, including the Young Men's League and the Student Federation. It raised funds through membership fees, special contributions, grain contributions by peasants, and donations for legal cases and members of families of prisoners. In addition, the Front received money from Kashmiris settled in Britain, most of who were from Pakistan-administered Kashmir.

The Plebiscite Front was also accused of receiving financial aid from Pakistan. Both the Government of India and the local Kashmiri state charged that Pakistani officials gave money to Begum Abdullah, Sheikh Abdullah's wife, who then gave the funds to the leaders of the organization. When the issue was brought up in court, the members of the Front denied the allegation. At the same time, however, a number of individuals alleged that Bakshi himself would provide funds for both the Political Conference and the Plebiscite Front. The reasons for this are simple: Bakshi needed to justify the need for a strong security state with unrestricted powers. If he was ever questioned by the Indian leadership, "he used the Front and its activities as a justification for many of his acts of omission and commission."[327] Thus, by being able to portray instability in the state, Bakshi continued to receive complete support by the Indian government for his activities in Kashmir. While the Front leadership denied this allegation, they conceded that some private individuals might have taken money from the government.[328] While Bakshi was certainly not responsible for the founding and development of these organizations,

[326] Bhat, "The Plebiscite Front," 175.
[327] Interview with Author, Munshi Ghulam Hassan, Srinagar, 26 Feb. 2014; Bhat, "The Plebiscite Front," 177.
[328] Bhat, "The Plebiscite Front," 177.

the possibility that he funded them from time to time suggests that the relationship between dissent and repression was not as clear-cut, and that at times Bakshi manipulated the "presence" of dissent in order for the state to continue to receive funding from the Government of India. This highlights, once more, the local dynamics and rivalries that were at play in this time.

The Front conducted a number of strategies to promote the cause of plebiscite. The first was propaganda against the Bakshi government. Workers would post posters and publish and circulate pamphlets and news throughout the region. They called for a social boycott of all pro-Indian Kashmiris; people were asked not to cooperate with them in the running of the administration. There were also cases where deceased relatives of pro-Indian political parties, for example, were refused burial space.[329] They regularly held meetings, rallies, and processions; the police or the Peace Brigade broke many of them up. They called for strikes, or *hartaals*, on important occasions. They sought to bring international pressure on India by writing to various delegations and international organizations.[330] They sent letters to world forums and regional gatherings of world leaders.[331] In addition, the Front attempted to maintain communal harmony and raised their voices against the corruption and political repression in the state.

Leaders of the Plebiscite Front, including Sheikh Abdullah, articulated their policies from a religious platform. Since public gatherings were heavily curtailed, most of the leaders spoke from places of worship. Similar to the conditions under Dogra Rule, Muslim shrines once more became the pulpits for the Plebiscite Front's political doctrines. Leaders spoke from shrines or mosques in Hazratbal, Khanaqah, Khanyar, and Soura, as well as during festivals and Eid when

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[329] Karan Singh, *Heir apparent: an autobiography*. Vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982)
[330] Bhat, "The Plebiscite Front," 179.
[331] Bhat notes that they did not attempt to gain the favor of communist or communist allied countries given the USSR's shift towards India in this period.

there were larger congregations.[332] They made reference to the Quran and stories from Islamic history. Munshi Ishaq, in one of his speeches, referred to Imam Hussain's fight for freedom and his martyrdom based on sacrifice, urging the audience to do the same.[333] Yet at the same time, the Front adopted a number of resolutions reaffirming the organization's faith and desire for communal harmony. It accused British rule of dividing the Hindus and Muslims of the Indian subcontinent.[334] While the organization never used the government-sponsored term Kashmiriyat, it positioned itself as an organization that was working for the betterment of all Kashmiris, not just Kashmiri Muslims.[335] In this regard, perhaps the leadership of the Front would not have contested Naya Kashmir's commitment to secularism. Rather, it was Kashmir's political status that was in dispute, suggesting that the ideals of Naya Kashmir were not simply the exclusive domain of the state, although that is what they came to be in subsequent years.

It is also possible that the Front utilized these discourses in an attempt to appeal to Kashmiri Muslims—not very different from the compulsions of Bakshi's government. Since the state had gained the monopoly on developmentalist discourses and the pursuit of progress for Kashmir's Muslims, the Front had little maneuverability aside from positioning itself through particular religious discourses. Sidney Tarrow refers to this phenomenon as "framing contention." He suggests, "social movements attempt to replace a dominant belief system that legitimizes the status quo with an alternative mobilizing belief system that supports collective action for change."[336] The Front had to distinguish themselves from the state leadership in terms of their use of symbols and discourse. In their interactions with the press and communication

[332] Gockami*, Kashmir: Politics and Plebiscite,* 70.
[333] Ibid, 187.
[334] Ibid, 191.
[335] *The Kashmir Conpiracy Case*, Report 7: GM Shah (Srinagar, Legal Defense Committee, 1964) 15.
[336] Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 106.

with international bodies, leaders relied heavily on secular tropes of democratic values and the right of self-determination. On the other hand, in their speeches to large congregations in mosques and shrines, they invoked Islamic stories of sacrifice and religious idioms. As a result, the leaderships' engagement with ordinary people was mediated by a religious vocabulary that highlighted their grievances by speaking of injustices. This strategy was furthered in subsequent decades.

The government attempted to break the influence of the two opposition groups in a variety of ways. A number of the state-led efforts, including cultural events like the Jashn-i-Kashmir, were organized by the government to divert public sympathy for the Sheikh. When these tactics failed to do so, as we will see below, the government resorted to lodging a legal case against the political opposition.

The Kashmir Conspiracy Case

1958 marked an important year for both the Political Conference and the Plebiscite Front. Bakshi's government was facing increasing Indian and international pressure to release Sheikh Abdullah, the only man who was seen as having the moral authority to settle the Kashmir issue once and for all. Critics claimed that the unlawful arrest of the Sheikh had weakened India's position in Kashmir and on the international stage.[337] Mir Qasim wrote in his autobiography that Prime Minister Nehru was eager to make peace with Sheikh Abdullah. For Bakshi, Qasim recalled, "This was a hard pill."[338] Perhaps Bakshi understood that once the Sheikh was released, his own position in Kashmir would be weakened, as the Government of India would try to make a deal with the Sheikh that would bring him back to power. Interestingly, it appears that the impediment to some sort of resolution was the leadership of the local Kashmiri state.

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[337] David E Lockwood, "Sheikh Abdullah and the Politics of Kashmir," *Asian Survey*, Volume 9., No. 5., (May, 1969) 384.
[338] Mir Qasim, *My Life and Times,* 72.

In New Delhi, the Indian Constituent Assembly formed a group to mobilize support in favor of the Sheikh's release and against Bakshi. Mridula Sarabhai, Rammanohar Lohia, and Ashok Mehta led these efforts. Sarabhai, a former Congresswoman, had maintained contact with a number of Plebiscite Front Leaders, as well as the Sheikh, and received criticism in India for her stand, many accusing her of supporting the Plebiscite Front, Political Conference, and Muslim Conference.[339]

While a number of Indians viewed Sarabhai in a predominantly negative light for her support of the pro-plebiscite movement, a number of Kashmiri activists at the time, including Anwar Ashai, told me during their interviews that she was sent by Nehru to provide a "soft face" of India, and make sure that they still had an open channel of dialogue with Sheikh Abdullah, despite having him arrested. Munshi Ishaq also suggested this perspective in his memoirs. He stated: "She showed her sympathy with the movement and was interfering in its matters. The mission of this clever woman was to finish Bakshi's government and turn the attention of the freedom movement towards acquisition of authority….In short, Mridula's effort had been for India's interests."[340]

Whether Sarabhai was truly vested in the pro-plebiscite movement, or whether she was placed within the leadership of the movement on behalf of the Government of India, is difficult to ascertain. Nonetheless, she played an important role in the state at the time of the Sheikh's release, which occurred in January 1958. In her account entitled "Call for Impartial Inquiry: Pre and Post Hazratbal Incident," Sarabhai presented the Plebiscite Front's position on the Sheikh's release and the tactics of Bakshi's government. She wrote that the purpose of the state's release of the Sheikh was not to bring him closer to Nehru to find a permanent solution, but "to get India

[339] Deshbandhu, *61 Constitution House* (Srinagar: Brocas Printing Press, 1954).
[340] Munshi Ishaq, *Nida-i-Haq*, 270.

out of embarrassment in the eyes of the world which is caused by Sheikh Sahib's continuous detention and imprisonment."[341] Furthermore, she revealed "those who are in close touch with the state authorities do not hesitate to say that Sheikh Sahib's release is necessary to re-arrest him and get him punished in the court of law." As soon as the Sheikh was released, Sarabhai detailed how the government intended to charge him with a series of crimes so that he would be legally detained, and lose whatever position he may still have in the eyes of Indian officials. She wrote how "notorious *goondas* were employed to demonstrate against him in order to provoke him and the people of the state….[they would] pose as Sheikites, raise anti-Indian and pro-Pakistan slogans." According to Sarabhai, this would serve as proof of his "antinational and dangerous role," and would be used to excite the Indian press in order to "get their support to let loose a bloody rule of repression in the interest of security of the state."[342] Sarabhai also accused the Bakshi government of planting a series of bomb explosions throughout the city, "to create an atmosphere of terror," so that the case could be made for the Sheikh to be detained for life. In an important revelation, she stated that it was not Government of India that was furthering tension– as they wanted a congenial atmosphere – but rather, the local state. Nonetheless, she accused the central government of turning "a blind eye" to the political developments in the state. Sarabhai's account of the intrigues surrounding the Sheikh's release is corroborated by a number of additional sources, including Mir Qasim and B.N. Mullick, the Director of the Indian Intelligence Bureau.[343]

It appeared Bakshi's fears were not unfounded. When the Sheikh was released on January 8, there was a surge of popular enthusiasm as people throughout the Valley held processions in

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[341] Sarabhai, *Call for Impartial Inquiry*, 13.
[342] Sarabhai, *Call for Impartial Enquiry*, 14.
[343] B.N. Mullick, in his book, *My Years with Nehru: Kashmir*, writes," When Sheikh Sahib was released, we knew he would engage in activities that would provide us with further evidence against him. That is why we were in no hurry to file a suit against him."

his honor. Plebiscite Front workers were told to maintain the peace and bear the atrocities of the government, and only to raise the slogans: Sher-i-Kashmir Zindabad (Long live the Lion of Kashmir), Free Plebiscite, and Hindu Muslim Unity Zindabad.[344] The Sheikh primarily spoke in places of worship – the Hazratbal shrine, Khanqah-e-Maulla, and the Jamia Masjid. Quoting verses from the Quran and reciting Iqbal's verses, he spoke against the Bakshi administration. In one gathering, he stated, "those who dishonor you and take away your freedom must eventually fail, provided you persevere in your faith and determination. The decision about Kashmir's future cannot be taken in Karachi or Delhi or Moscow or Washington. Kashmir belongs to the people of Kashmir and they alone can decide its fate."[345] In addition to giving speeches, the Sheikh visited the families of those who had been killed in the aftermath of his arrest. In his memoirs, he recalled how "people came out in large numbers. Women formed rows and greeted me singing….It was the women of the same locality who, known for their lively spirit, had become the despair of the Dogra army in the early phase of our movement."[346] In one stroke, the Sheikh painted a historical continuity between his quests for self-determination with the struggle against the Dogras in the pre-Partition period. This historical continuity was later mentioned in a letter to Mr. Chaudhry, who was "the Chairman of the Defense Committee for Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues" in the United Kingdom. The Sheikh wrote, "Ever since 1931, when the national movement was launched, our ideal has been a right of self-determination, for the people of the state, and to that end I am contributing my humble bit. The present is just a stage in that struggle."[347] It is important to note that in his speeches and letters of the time, the Sheikh does not make explicit reference to his earlier rejection of the two-nation theory, which had led him to

[344] Sarabhai, *Call for Impartial Enquiry*, 31.
[345] Sheikh Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar*, 456- 457.
[346] Sheikh Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar,* 457.
[347] "Letter from Sheikh Abdullah to Chaudhry Sahib," from Special Jain, Jammu, 25 Jan. 1060. Available here: http://www.confluence.mobi/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Sheik-Abdullas-Letter.pdf

support Kashmir's accession to India. Rather, he foregrounds that the accession was to be temporary, as Nehru himself had pledged to the world community that the people of the state would decide their future affiliations. In the letter, he stated, "Unfortunately, India and Pakistan got bogged down into minor details of plebiscite arrangements." By placing the blame on both India and Pakistan, he argues, "for the last twelve years the gulf between India and Pakistan has widened, and in the process the people of Kashmir have been crushed in every conceivable manner."[348] In creating a historical continuity from the time of the Dogras to Kashmir's movement for self-determination, I suggest that the Sheikh was deliberately vague about the National Conferences' earlier support of the accession and was also vague about what "self-determination" would actually entail. This is perhaps because the Sheikh was attempting to toe multiple lines—he could not alienate the Government of India by calling for accession to Pakistan as that would contravene his stance on a Kashmiri—not Muslim—nationalism, but neither could he alienate the Kashmiri masses by foregoing the cause of self-determination. The question of what "self-determination" meant for the leaders of the Plebiscite Front will be addressed below.

At the time of his release, local authorities, perhaps not anticipating such a large response from the public, went on the offensive. The Peace Brigade went throughout the state and assaulted those who had put up decorations for the Sheikh's welcome. Other supporters or members of opposition groups were kept in police custody.[349] It was on Friday, February 21, however, that the situation grew out of control. The Sheikh was scheduled to give a speech at the Hazratbal Shrine, and over 200,000 people were expected to attend. A clash occurred between National Conference workers and workers from the Plebiscite Front and Political Conference,

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[348] Ibid.
[349] Sarabhai, *Call for Impartial Enquiry*, 34.

resulting in the death of a National Conference worker, Mohiuddin Banday. Instead of the regular jail officials, the Central Reserve Police Force was deployed to deal with the political workers; a development that Makhdoomi said "was meant to treat us as criminals instead of political dissenters.[350] The government arrested a number of Sheikh's supporters and opposition party members, including Sadr-uddin Mujahid, Sofi Mohammed Akbar, and Pandit Raghunath Vaishnavi, all of who were detained without warrants. Sarabhai's account detailed the names of 255 people that were arrested from February 21 to March 21. She argued that the Hazratbal Incident was concocted by the state "to create an inflammatory situation to influence international developments." Mir Qasim affirmed this perspective in his autobiography: "[Hazratbal] was engineered by Bakshi supporters to promote the justification of Sheikh's re-arrest" as well as the importance of the Kashmir Conspiracy Case.[351] Sheikh Abdullah also blamed Bakshi for making "this unfortunate man [Banday] their scapegoat in order to blame his murder on us."[352] He wrote a letter to Nehru, complaining of Bakshi's repressive policies. Nehru sent an emissary, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, to visit Kashmir and meet with the Sheikh. Bakshi became aware of this development, and the Sheikh was rearrested and sent to Kud Jail in Jammu on April 29.[353]

After the Sheikh's second arrest, the government charged members of the Political Conference and Plebiscite Front with conspiracy against the Kashmir state in what became known as the Kashmir Conspiracy Case. The case consisted of the Bomb Case, in which the state accused the groups with planting explosive bombs throughout the city, as well as the Hazratbal murder case that resulted in the death of a National Conference worker; the prosecution claimed

[350] Interview with Author, Pirzada Hafizullah Makhdoomi.
[351] Syed Mir Qasim, *My Life and Times,* 87.
[352] Sheikh Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar*, 460-461.
[353] Sheikh Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar*, 463-464.

to have a list of 300 witnesses and 136 co-conspirators. On May 25, under Section 121-A and 120-B of the Ranbir Penal Code, and under Section 32 of the Security Rules, a case was registered against Mirza Afzal Beg and twenty-five others in the court of the special magistrate of Jammu. Official state discourse positioned the events in the state as a law and order issue, combined with the specter of a foreign hand. They were accused of joining hands with Pakistan in order to overthrow the Kashmiri government using violent means.[354] The neighboring country was accused of using these individuals in the state to collect military and other intelligence in order to "carry on pro-Pakistan propaganda and to spread disorder in the state."[355] If convicted, they were liable to face a life sentence or death. A supplementary case was registered for the Sheikh. The Sheikh claimed that Nehru was not in favor of keeping the Sheikh behind bars, but had to concede given the local state's insistence.[356] On the side of the prosecution was a barrister from Calcutta, Mr. Mitra. The lawyers for the defense were Mohammad Latif Qureshi, Mubarak Shah and Ghulam Mohammad Shah. Mirza Afzal Beg, although an accused, also served as legal counsel. Despite repeated requests from the Sheikh to Nehru, no lawyer in India came to the aid of the defense. Eventually, two barristers from London, Mr. Dinglefoot and J. Clerk, served as chief counsel for the defense.

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[354] B.N. Mullick, *My Years with Nehru: Kashmir*, 51. The official charge against them was: "Whereas it is reported that between the 9th day of August 1953 and the 29th day of April, 1958, the persons specified in the schedule, amongst themselves and with other persons, known and unknown at Srinagar and diverse other places both in and outside the state of Jammu and Kashmir, conspired to over-awe by means of criminal force and show of criminal force the duly constituted government of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, with the object of throwing that government and of facilitating wrongful annexation of the territory of that state by Pakistan, by creating amongst the members of the public hatred, contempt and disaffection against the said government, creating communal ill feeling and disharmony in the state, causing disturbance of peace and tranquility and bringing about a state of public disorder and disruption in the life of the community, by making a show of criminal force and using such force and by committing other prejudicial acts, with the assistance of Pakistan agencies, in particular in securing from them funds and materials including arms and explosives." See *Kashmir Conspiracy Case,* Report 1 (Delhi: Raj Art Press Deputy Ganj).
[355] *Kashmir Conspiracy Case*, Report 1 (Delhi: Raj Art Press Deputy Ganj) (iii).
[356] Sheikh Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar,* 466.

The legal team of the accused collected important documentation, including statements from both sides as well as other important correspondence under the Legal Defense Committee. These reports were then published and distributed so that people would have a better understanding of the proceedings. While these reports are from the perspective of the accused, they provide important insight into the workings of repression and dissent in the state at the time. For one, the state continually represented the work of opposition groups in Kashmir to be entirely sponsored by Pakistan. The prosecution stipulated that it was Pakistan that sought to inflame communal tensions amongst the Muslims to work against the government and in favor of Pakistan.[357] Although the defense brought up the promises made by the Indian leadership and the United Nations to hold a plebiscite in the state, as well as constitutional and international law, the prosecution did not directly address these points. The charge of raising communal sentiments in the state was an important one. It allowed the prosecution to paint the Plebiscite Front –and Sheikh Abdullah—as a communal Muslim organization, that would likely deflect any sympathies from external observers. In response, the defense reiterated its commitment to a non-violent and non-communal struggle, arguing that many of those who were accused were at the forefront of the fight against the tribals in 1947. The "bogey of Pakistan" was raised to deflect the concerns of the political opposition, a strategic tactic that would gain further currency in subsequent decades.

Second, the defendants accused the state of going to great lengths to break the determination of the political activists, often utilizing torture in order to do so. In a number of letters to the magistrate, one of the accused, Ghulam Mohammed Chickan, wrote of how the "interrogation center in Srinagar manned by the personnel of the Intelligence Bureau of India has been utilized to subject the accused to process of brain-washing and other third degree methods

[357] *Kashmir Conspiracy Case,* Report 1, 10.

in order to extort confessions from them."[358] He requested the protection of the court as he felt his life was endangered since he had disclosed the maltreatment inside the jail.[359] Many of those who were arrested suffered from serious ailments, especially since most of them were older in age. Mir Masood Nazir described how the jail authorities "would not allow me to sleep, used to abuse me, somebody scratched my hair, someone slapped me, and some kicked and fisted me, these things continued for many days and my condition became so serious that I cannot express it in words."[360] In another letter, an inmate described how he was "tied with chains and was hanged."[361] Nazir was asked to walk barefoot on ice many times and told that if he renounced the demand for plebiscite, the government would employ him. In response to these allegations, the state denied the existence of interrogation centers as described in the torture petitions, stating that "it is absolutely false that any torture is practiced," and that the allegations against the state "are put for use of propaganda utilized by the interested foreign power in making propaganda in the world."[362]

In my interview with Makhdoomi, he recalled that the government had told the CRPF officials that were meant to keep watch on the workers that they were killers. "So, they *lathi* charged us, locked us up during the night. We tried to tell them we are all educated, lawyers, professionals, but they tortured us. There were two categories…Category A consisted of higher-level individuals, including ministers and lawyers. Category B was everyone else."[363] Ishaq suggested that this categorization "broke the movement," as the discriminatory standard caused tension amongst the political activists.[364] Aside from the harsh treatment, Makhdoomi also

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358 *Kashmir Conspiracy Case*, Report 1, 10.
359 Ibid, 10.
360 Ibid, 14.
361 Ibid, 22.
362 *Kashmir Conspiracy Case*, Report 3 (Srinagar: Legal Defense Committee, 1964).
363 Interview with Author, Pirzada Hafizullah Makhdoomi.
364 Munshi Ishaq, *Nida-i-Haq,* 272.

described the mental stress the workers endured. Many of their families were struggling financially. The Plebiscite Front attempted to collect donations to help them[365] However, as the pressures inside the jails increased, a number of workers were lured by Bakshi's promises and made deals with the state. They were allowed to leave the jail, and accommodated into various positions. Makhdoomi said that after some months, there were only 15-20 people left, as a vast majority had made a deal with the government. The state government strategically deployed accommodation in order to curb dissent, and fracture the opposition parties.

The Kashmir Conspiracy Case dragged on for a number of years. There was much back and forth about the location of the court - the defense wanted the case to be shifted from Jammu to Srinagar- the list of witnesses, the treatment in jail of those who were arrested, and the evidence that was obtained by the prosecution. The accused pleaded innocent to the charges against them, emphasizing that they had neither conspired against the Government of India or Kashmir, and nor had they any liaison with Pakistan. They argued that they stood for the inalienable right of Kashmiri's to determine their future.[366] Beg, in his statement, stated:

> Our bitter experience of the past 12 years has convinced us that democracy in Kashmir cannot take roots, civil liberties will be mere moonshine, fundamental rights a distant dream and clean administration no more than a mirage as long as the political issue is not perfectly settled. Until then, the prospect of peaceful progress and supremacy of the rule of law in Kashmir, will continue to be dim and dismal. Any patriot of Kashmir and anyone who wishes well by her people will lend his unreserved support to us to bring about a peaceful lasting and honorable settlement this dispute which will give the people of Kashmir a sense of participation in the decision.[367]

The workers of the Plebiscite Front presented their struggle as one that was a continuation of the struggle against the Dogra Raj. Mohiuddin Shawl, who was a lawyer and also imprisoned, suggested that the Government of India and the executors of its policies in Kashmir attempted to

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365 Bhat, "The Plebiscite Front."
366 Gockhami, *Kashmir: Politics and Plebiscite*, 84.
367 *Kashmir Conspiracy Case*, Report 7, Series 2 (Srinagar: Legal Defense Committee, 1964) 84.

focus people's attention "on relatively minor issues so that the people forget the all-pervading and explosive issue of accession."[368]

Once the prosecution was finished with their witnesses, the 1962 war between India and China broke out, interrupting the proceedings. Upon the request of the Government of India, who wanted to reconcile with the Sheikh, Bakshi was made to withdraw the Conspiracy case against the political prisoners. Those who were accused were slowly released over a period of three and half years.

Compromise and Betrayal

For over a decade, the Front's most important tactic had been the boycott of general elections in 1957 and 1962. The leaders accused the elections of being rigged both years in Bakshi's favor. In 1957, the legislators had all run unopposed, since before the nomination papers were filed, there was much repression.[369] In 1962, however, the Front faced a crisis. Many of them had been released from jail and there was a split in its leadership regarding the elections. A number of leaders were interested in running for election and gaining power through that route, while others were against it. Some ran during the 1962 elections, and were expelled from the party.[370] The Front prepared for subsequent elections in 1967 and 1972, but the government declared the organization unlawful before the elections. Mir Qasim wrote that the popularity of the Front was such that had they run for elections, they would have certainly won, given that Bakshi's rule had been "brutal."[371]

Because of their changing stance on the elections, a group of Plebiscite Front members split with the Front and called themselves the Ishaq group, led by Munshi Ishaq. In his memoirs,

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[368] *Kashmir Conspiracy Case*, Report 7, 54.
[369] *Kashmir Conspiracy Case,* Report 7, 67.
[370] Ibid, 101.
[371] Mir Qasim, *My Life and Times.*

Ishaq recalled that during a press conference, he argued that elections could not substitute for a plebiscite, and that those within the Plebiscite Front who had participated in elections did not represent the Front as a whole: "Those people who are leaving the Front's basic stance and publics desires and adopting another way, which would violate the basic principle of the party, their fate will be the same which happened to the other people before," he argued.[372] In response, the party leaders of the Plebiscite Front declared Ishaq "dishonest and treacherous." However, word of the deviation had quickly spread and "students and youngsters protested in Srinagar and in other areas of the Valley, in which tear gas, stones and baton-charge was used on them. For getting these protests under control, the government implemented arrests on a large scale."

In his writings, Ishaq accused a few members of the executive committee of the Plebiscite Front as well as the Political Conference of being under the influence of the government. He said most were concerned with obtaining power, and did not hesitate to look after their own interests before that of the movements'. The leadership was repeatedly approached and pressured by the state to compromise, but Ishaq lamented that a movement which had "shaken the foundations of India," would have been able to give the people their freedom if the "leadership had sincerity instead of lust of power."[373]

Consequently, it appeared that Sheikh Abdullah and Beg were preparing to work within the Indian Constitution and reconciling with the Indian leadership. While the Sheikh-Indira Accord of 1975 has been discussed at length elsewhere, what is important to note is that the perception that the leadership of the Plebiscite Front was "pursuing a struggle for power all the time" was popular.[374] Sheikh and Beg converted the party into the National Conference once again, and the issue of plebiscite was rendered obsolete as all discussions on Kashmir's future

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[372] Munshi Ishaq, *Nida-i-Haq*, 18.
[373] Munshi Ishaq, *Nida-i-Haq*, 307.
[374] Ibid, 99; Gockhami, *Kashmir: Politics and Plebiscite,* 250-251.

were to occur within the framework of the Indian constitution. Both men took the reins of power. Beg famously described the years of the Plebiscite Front as "political wilderness."

To the detractors of the accord, it seemed that the primary leaders of the Front used the organization as a negotiating tool with the Government of India, in an attempt to secure power for themselves, or perhaps, negotiate greater autonomy for Kashmir. This is why they were deliberately vague on what "self-determination" entailed and their stance on the two-nation theory. This begs the question: why did they deliberately allow people—including their own membership—to believe that their struggle for self-determination was ultimately for Pakistan? Perhaps the leadership believed that it would be the only way to galvanize ordinary Kashmiris who, as Bazaz declared were "yearning for Pakistan." This confusion is also what perhaps differentiated the leadership of the Political Conference from the Plebiscite Front. While the former was explicitly pro-Pakistan, it appears the latter was instrumentalizing the "idea" of Pakistan to make political inroads within Kashmiri society.

Alternatively, Jabbar-Gockhami argues that the Front's leaders became disillusioned with Pakistan's infiltration across the border in 1965, which led to another India-Pakistan War that resulted in the Treaty of Tashkent that only further solidified the status quo. The leaders became further disillusioned during the 1971 war, when East Pakistan became the newly independent state of Bangladesh. They saw both events as indicative of the failures of the Pakistani state, and started to shift from their original stance. For those who remained committed to the idea of the plebiscite, the change in stance was devastating. Ishaq bemoaned the fact that despite the "priceless sacrifices of people, the end of the freedom movement came in the form of political slavery, and the worst economic conditions."[375]

Conclusion

[375] Munshi Ishaq, *Nida-i-Haq*, 362

This chapter has shown how dissent and repression were an integral part of Bakshi's government, and foregrounds the role of the local state in dealing strictly with Kashmiris who sought a peaceful, non-communal politics of self-determination. The emphasis here on the local state is important—most of the policies mentioned above were done with the knowledge, but not the direct involvement, of the Government of India. While the latter knew that repression was taking place, Bakshi and the state government were primarily responsible for its implementation.

Dissent in this time primarily revolved around the politics of plebiscite. Dissent was by no means revolutionary, critical of the idea of the nation-state or operating from a non-statist vision. The opposition accepted the authority of the United Nations and the international bodies and invoked them to make their demands. In addition, the discourse of 'azadi' or independence had yet to enter Kashmir's political culture, although some leaders may have favored it from time to time. At the same time, the goals of the opposition were not as clear-cut. There was no clear program of what would occur after a plebiscite would take place.

In addition, the ways in which the state sought to accommodate modes of resistance shows its deep entrenchment into Kashmiri society, which heightened the prospects of betrayal and compromise. Kashmir's perpetual "state of emergency" brought people under the control of the state. State repression, however, did not lead to the radicalization of the opposition leadership, as it had in other parts of the world. Indeed, in Kashmir, it led to a mainstreaming and co-opting of the opposition leadership, who made the decision to reconcile with the Government of India. While state repression effectively neutralized the primary political parties that operated in this period, as we will see in the conclusion, the two parties played an important role in mobilizing an entire generation of Kashmiris that became politically invested in the right to self-determination.

Most importantly, dissent against Kashmir's accession to India was not simply a result of Pakistan's geopolitical agenda, but rather, was an indigenous movement that was mutually reinforced by the state's repressive policies. What I aimed to foreground in this chapter is that certain repressive practices of the state, ranging from draconian laws to strategies of accommodation and censorship, as well as particular dissenting discourses, were very much part of the repertoire of the early postcolonial Kashmiri state and broader political society and thus, were integral to the state project of Naya Kashmir.

Chapter Five

Remembering Naya Kashmir in Post Militancy Srinagar

A vast majority of Kashmiri Muslims who went to India for study, had a sort of hatred for India, but the air was so oppressive that they couldn't express it. The Kashmiri educated middle class always lived in such a dichotomy. When a Kashmiri Muslim was engaged in government service, in the bureaucracy, he was an Indian. But at home, he was a Pakistani. He cried if Pakistan lost a cricket match, but then when it was time to go to office he changed from his pheran to Western clothes, took dictates from his bosses, and somehow became instrumental in suppressing his own people.[376]

Dr. Mir Nazir Ahmed, former Medical Superintendent

Introduction

The quote above illustrates the complex entanglements of ideology, religious identity and class that defined Kashmir's early postcolonial period and their lasting legacies today. I began this project with a desire to understand the significance and the afterlife of the Naya Kashmir manifesto, and the ways it was—and wasn't—incorporated into Bakshi's state building project. In the first three chapters, I examined state policies in three critical areas: economic development, education, and cultural revitalization. This chapter is methodologically different from the previous ones, in that it utilizes life narratives—both oral and written—to understand how state policies impacted society and how they were experienced. In doing so, my aim is to show the continued relevance of Naya Kashmir for Kashmir's contemporary period, and how it gets refracted over time. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the self-perception of a number of educated Kashmiri Muslims and to present their life narratives as an important

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[376] A *pheran* is a type of shirt work by Kashmiri men and women. It is loose, reaches the knees and is often made of wool for the long winter months.

vantage point from which to understand shifts in Kashmiri Muslim society in the early postcolonial period. I specifically chose educated Kashmiri Muslims not only because they were one of the primary beneficiaries of these policies, but also because a number of them were also involved with Bakshi's project of state building. Indeed, one of the primary impacts of Bakshi's state building project was that it contributed to the creation of an upwardly mobile, educated Kashmiri Muslim middle-class. Second, a number of those who wrote their memoirs or autobiographies were a part of this educated class. Focusing on this demographic allows me to underscore a primary goal of this dissertation: to better understand how these individuals negotiated their aspirations with broader political realities, and their involvement with the implementation of Naya Kashmir on the ground. This chapter plays an important role in the larger dissertation in that it brings out the voices and writings of those who Naya Kashmir was intended to benefit. I am interested in the following questions: How do individuals understand and memorialize this period? How do they speak of the impact of Naya Kashmir in their lives? And importantly, how do contemporary politics in the region shape how they understand and speak of the past?

This chapter uses life narratives—autobiography, memoir and oral history—to understand the impact of Bakshi's government on an emerging Kashmiri Muslim educated middle class and the ongoing relevance of this period for them today. I use the term "life narrative" to refer to these sources, as it is a term that signals shifting self-referential practices in narratives that engage with the past, and reflect an identity in the present.[377] Life narratives exist in a variety of diverse media and take the producer's life as their subject. They allow for an understanding of the complex relations between public and official constructions of history and

[377] Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010) 1.

private recollections, a process that results in the constitution of "popular memory."[378] My methodological reasoning in using life narratives is to foreground the importance of Naya Kashmir as it relates to the consolidation of my respondents "Kashmiri Muslim identity" in the early postcolonial period. I am not interested in the veracity of the claims made by my respondents; my analysis resists the idea of recovering "unmediated truths" or objective representations of reality. Given that "personal memories are not easily separable from the structures of representation of official history," I am more interested in how individuals and groups wish to conceive of their realities, their collectivities, and to what ends.[379]

These life narratives were written, and shared, in a starkly different period from that of Bakshi's government. They were constructed in the aftermath of the militancy of the late eighties, an armed rebellion against the Indian state that was supported by Pakistan. It was a time when a vast majority of Kashmiri Pandits left the Valley out of fear of a militancy that was increasingly inflected with Islamist discourses; some lived in camps in Jammu, while others lived in cities in India and abroad. During and in the aftermath of the militancy, Kashmir became heavily militarized as over half a million Indian troops patrolled the region and bunkers and security zones arose in various neighborhoods. As a result, most of the narratives I gathered were deeply embroiled with the political present, as my respondents attempted to "explain" or "understand" contemporary Kashmir through their recollections of the past. Indeed, most of my interviewees made reference to the lack of militarization in the 1950s and 1960s, given that Indian troops were mostly stationed along the border regions with Pakistan, instead of in civilian areas. As one interviewee explained, "there was not as much tension before. We didn't have so

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[378] Mahua Sarkar, *Visible Histories, Disappearing Women: Producing Muslim Womanhood in Late Colonial Bengal* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008) 134.
[379] Mahua Sarkar, *Visible Histories, Disappearing Women,* 135.

many paramilitary troops. The mothers wouldn't care if their children went out."[380] The reference to "not as much tension before," is in contrast to the present danger, as hundreds of Kashmiri youth have been killed in the latest phase of protests against the Government of India since 2008. Hence, the fear of mothers for their children remains an important trope for understanding the comparisons between now, and "in those days" or "before." "The before," which I suggest references the early postcolonial period, is a period that is situated in terms that both signify continuity to the present, but also a sharp break.

Given that how people remember and what they remember is historically specific and contextual to the time of writing and contexts of telling, "remembering has a politics."[381] Since all of the oral interviews were conducted after 2008, the present iteration of the conflict has permeated these life narratives. This chapter will show how this context has significantly shaped the ways in which the early postcolonial period is remembered, or in other words how it has permeated the "memory" of this earlier period. Thus, the "history" of this period and the "memory" of this period overlap and diverge in particular ways. In situating these narratives, I use the framework of "collective remembering," which allows me to understand how individual recollection is constantly mediated by larger cultural politics.[382] The collective remembering of pertinent historical events or themes dominates the life narratives of my interviewees, which revolve around particular moments of crisis, including Partition and the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah as well as particular themes of Muslim empowerment and inter-religious relations. As Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson argue, "collective memory helps explain how societies develop notions of shared national history and even how individuals acquire their own memories related to the social frameworks of family, religion and social class." As we will see, most of my

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[380] Interview with Author, Srinagar, Zahid Ghulam Mohammed, 14 Nov. 2013.
[381] Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography,* 22-25.
[382] Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography,* 25.

respondents spoke of the past not as individuals, but in reference to a broader Kashmiri Muslim identity. The Kashmiri Muslim "subject," while marked by fractures, was thus constituted through reference to these historical accounts. What is important to note is that this identity emerged out of a sense of a shared *political* context, as the actual religious practices of my respondents varied.

This chapter has two primary aims. One, through an analysis of my respondents narratives, I underscore how the project of state reform led to the consolidation of a heightened sense of a Kashmiri Muslim identity, one that existed alongside other class, regional and gendered identities, but was nonetheless sharpened as a political community. Through these life narratives, I highlight how my respondents' representation of the past remained at odds with the nationalist narratives of both the Indian and Pakistani nation-states, but were continuously beholden, and subject, to these dominant narratives. These representations were also at odds with other non-Muslim, primarily Pandit, identities in the Valley. Second, I highlight the multiple subjectivities that were at play in shaping this identity, suggesting the "instability" of the notion of a unified identity, and the ways in which some of my respondents expressed their personal challenges in navigating these multiple contexts. For example, my respondents spoke of multiple aspirations that existed simultaneously; while they wanted a political resolution for Kashmir (mostly through a UN mandated plebiscite), they also aspired to have jobs and support their families, and did not seek to disrupt the status quo to a large degree. In many ways, some manifested a persona in public that was very different from their domestic or private life. As Kashmiri Muslims attempted to navigate the complex political and social terrain of Kashmir's disputed status, it is these multifaceted narrations that emerge through the life narratives. I argue that for a number of Kashmiri Muslims, this period was marked by ambivalence. For many, it

was a moment of significant transition. Preexisting norms of social status, women's roles and mobility were challenged, and it seemed a moment of possibility. At the same time, however, this "opening" existed at a time of severe political repression and other political closures. As a result, the life narratives I analyze do not speak to a straightforward linear narrative of progress. While they highlighted openings, they also made reference to closures, and this chapter highlights the interplay between the two to show the nature of state-society relations in this period, and also to examine why Naya Kashmir's impact was limited.

I conducted nearly twenty-five semi-structured interviews in Srinagar between September 2013 and August 2014. Most of my interviewees were Kashmiri Muslims who had been involved, on some level, with state institutions, either as officials in the state bureaucracy, doctors, teachers, or engineers. A majority were male, while three were female. Most of them were born and lived in Srinagar, often from the Old City (known colloquially as "downtown"), and moved to neighborhoods constructed for government employees in the fifties and the sixties. Aside from those who came from families that were involved with the shrines, most of the families were in business, and in particular, shawls, handicrafts, and other small scale cottage industries.[383] A handful came from the few Muslim families that served in the government under the Dogras. They were primarily educated in government-run schools or in schools run by the *anjuman* Nusrat ul Islam, including the prominent Islamia high school, which schooled many members of the bureaucratic class. Before 1947, only a handful of Kashmiri Muslims went to schools run by Christian missionaries. Two males had left Kashmir in the first two decades after Partition, and settled in Pakistan, returning to Kashmir in recent years either to visit family or for political reasons. One female had left Kashmir in the seventies and was now settled in the United States. One of my interviewees was a Kashmiri Pandit, a retired English professor from the

[383] Interview with Author, Ehsan Fazili, Srinagar, 18 Aug. 2014.

Women's College in Srinagar who was one of the few Pandits to remain in the Kashmir Valley during the militancy. All of my interviewees benefited in some way from Bakshi's policies, either by obtaining admission in educational institutions or gaining employment in the state's bureaucracy, which helped solidify their family's financial status and upward mobility. A few were educated in Lahore before Partition, while some were trained in Aligarh, Amritsar or Lucknow after Partition. Some were sent by the Kashmiri state for additional training in the United States or the United Kingdom. Others remained in Srinagar for all of their higher education. Most continue to live in Srinagar, although they may travel to visit family in Delhi and other cities in India, the United Kingdom and the United States.

During the course of the interviews, I asked a number of questions regarding their families, childhood, schooling days, and work life. Some of my interviewees addressed these questions directly, while many focused on pivotal events in their life, specifically around key moments in Kashmiri history, and provided additional details upon my prompting. At many times, I had to re-direct the conversation from their interpretation of Kashmiri history—and the various betrayals of the Kashmiri leadership—towards their own life and experience. The desire to present a collective/corrective history was one that many of my respondents shared. The interviews were conducted in a mix of English, Kashmiri, and Urdu. I met with some individuals for six meetings, and others for one. With a few, crucial details regarding their role in the bureaucracy or any tensions they faced as Kashmiri Muslims emerged after multiple meetings, once "trust" was developed between me and the interviewee.

Given that these encounters are always situated between the identities of the researcher and the researched, my positionality as a Kashmiri female, from a Muslim family, was critical in opening up doors, especially in speaking with former bureaucrats. The maternal side of my

family is also part of the bureaucratic class, which allowed me to easily make some initial contacts. The level of initial trust was established through family contacts, and I am well aware that given the heightened sensitivities around research in an area like Kashmir, this went a long way. Those who aligned themselves with the current movement for self-determination were very vocal in sharing some information with me, although a number of silences emerged around issues of what was perceived as a "betrayal"—those Kashmiris who had safeguarded their own interests over that of the "movement" or *tehreek*—as well as their relations with Kashmiri Pandits. The term *tehreek,* which signified the struggle for self-determination or justice, was used in many cases to describe the entirety of Kashmir's late colonial and postcolonial history. Those who might be seen as having been "pro-India" were less vocal, providing little to no information on their political views and only spoke in general terms. At times, the silences were stark, and I note them in the ensuing pages.

In addition to these oral interviews, this chapter also engages with autobiographies and memoirs. In the past three decades, a number of Kashmiri Muslim bureaucrats and political elites published autobiographies or memoirs. The most prominent of them was the autobiography of Sheikh Abdullah, *Aatish-i-Chinar,* which was published in 1982, before the militancy. The rest were published after, including accounts written by former Chief Ministers Syed Mir Qasim and Farooq Abdullah, political leaders such as Mirza Afzal Beg and Munshi Ghulam Ishaq, religious leaders such as Qari Saifuddin of the Jamaat-i-Islam and educationists, including Agha Ashraf Ali. While I make reference to a number of these writings, I rely primarily on one autobiography: Shamla Mufti. This is primarily because Mufti's autobiography goes beyond the realm of the political intrigues of Kashmir, and speaks directly to issues of social and cultural transformation within families, homes, schools, colleges and workspaces; her account, therefore, gives us a

unique perspective of Naya Kashmir that is not found in the narratives of the Kashmiri male political and religious leadership. Mufti was one of the premier female educationists in the Valley, and the former principal of the Women's College. She was also one of the first Kashmiri Muslim women to receive her Master's degree, in Aligarh. Her autobiography was originally written in Kashmiri and was then translated into Urdu in 1998 under the title *Chilman se Chaman* (translated as *From Darkness to Light*). Writing in the nineties, Shamla provides an overview of her life—her family background, education, marriage and home life, experiences working in the schools and colleges, as well as travels outside of Kashmir. Through her personal observations of the changes in Kashmiri society at this time, we are able to envision the multiple ways in which an emerging Kashmiri Muslim educated middle class experienced Naya Kashmir, and also, how the present was inflected in their memories of the past.

I identify a number of themes that reemerged in these life narratives, both oral and written. The six predominant themes were: situating themselves in a particular Islamic lineage and geography and highlighting the stark condition of Kashmiri Muslims under the Dogras; the ideological divergences amongst Kashmiri Muslims and the complexity of Partition; the contingent nature of people's decisions and attitudes towards Pakistan in the aftermath of accession and Sheikh Abdullah's arrest; relations with Kashmiri Pandits; increase of opportunities and changing norms of social status and mobility; and finally, the empowerment of women. Two of these themes cover the pre-Bakshi period; they are important, however, for understanding how Naya Kashmir is recalled in the narratives. These themes relate to the openings that Naya Kashmir engendered, but also discuss how these openings were restricted as a result of Kashmir's political status. Ultimately, they bring our attention to how Naya Kashmir consolidated these respondents sense of a "Kashmiri Muslim identity." I turn now to how a

number of life narratives began, with an attempt to situate a broader Muslim middle class in Naya Kashmir.

Situating the Muslim Middle Class and Dogra Rule

The question of "beginnings" in relation to life narratives is an important one. How a narrative is constructed reveals a great deal about the speaker's relationship to their history, and how they wish to be perceived. Most of the life narratives of this class of Kashmiri Muslims began with the narrator's family background, or *khandan*, in an attempt to situate their ancestry in a particular Islamic lineage that traced its origins to Central Asia. Particular reference was made to whether ones family was *sayyid, peer*, or Kashmiri Hindus who had converted to Islam. *Sayyids* were descendants of the first Muslim families in Kashmir, who traced their lineage to the Prophet Muhammad. A group of *sayyid* missionaries arrived in Kashmir in the fourteenth century with Shah-i-Hamdan, a Persian Sufi and religious scholar who was seen as influential in spreading Islam to Kashmir.[384] *Peers* were those families who had ties to prominent Sufi orders, and were well versed in Persian, including poetry, and the religious sciences. Many were caretakers of shrines. A *peer* family was usually distinguished by the letter "choti yay" that ended their name, as in Qadri, Andrabi, or Geelani. Many of the first educated Muslims in Kashmir came from these two types of families, which were broadly considered as *khandani*, or of "good" and noble family name. To be of *khandani* background was not the same as being wealthy, as some *khandani* families were not well off. Rather, it was a conceptualization of social status that depended more on family name and heritage. At times, those families that were highly educated, but were not *sayyid* or *peers,* were also considered *khandani.* A majority of Kashmiri Muslims, however, were converts from Hinduism, many of them lower caste Hindus

[384] Mohammad Ishaq Khan, "Sharia State and Conversions in Medieval Kashmir: An Assessment of Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani's Historical Role," in Anup Taneja (ed) *Sufi Cults and the Evolution of Medieval Indian Culture* (New Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research, 2003) 139-67.

that were attracted to the egalitarian mission of the Sufi orders.[385] One of my respondents referred to them as "aborigines" of the land.[386]

The desire to narrate a particular Islamic lineage permeated *all* life narratives—including those Kashmiri Muslims who self-identified as secular or not practicing, as well as those who were more religiously inclined. For example, Syed Mir Qasim, one of the primary left-leaning leaders of the National Conference and the former Chief Minister of the state (1971-1975), begins his autobiography by speaking of his ancestors who arrived to Kashmir from Iraq "four hundred years ago." Qasim's family is from the Village of Doru in South Kashmir, near Verinag. He describes how his father's uncle, who recorded the family's history in Persian and also wrote on the life of the Prophet Muhammad, tells him of his family heritage as a *sayyid*, from the line of Shah Mohammad Syedullah, who arrived to Kashmir in 1664.[387] In an interview, Ghulam Hassan Shah, a retired IAS officer who resides of Sanatnagar, also began by describing his family's *sayyid* origins on both his maternal and paternal sides, showing me a *shehjar,* or family tree, that was hung on the wall of his living room. "There was a lot of emphasis…most of the families would write "Syed" as a prefix to their name," he explained, "they were considered noble, they didn't fight with people, couldn't harm anyone."[388] Sheikh Abdullah also begins his autobiography by describing his family as having converted from Hinduism, "an aborigine," but situates his birthplace, Soura, as having spiritual importance for Kashmiri Muslims because it was the home of a prominent saint.[389]

Shamla Mufti's autobiography provides a rich account of life under Dogra rule for Kashmiri Muslims. Not only does she highlight the importance of *khandan*, but she also marks a

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385 Ibid.
386 Interview with Author, Zahid Ghulam Muhammad.
387 Mir Qasim, *My Life and Times,* 1-5.
388 Interview with Author, Ghulam Hassan Shah.
389 Sheikh Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar,* 22-24.

shared geopolitical space, reliant upon important landmarks and sense of history. She begins her narrative by providing her family background, and in particular, situates herself as coming from a *peer* family. Shamla is born as the youngest of four in 1925, the beginning of the reign of Majaraja Hari Singh, the last Dogra ruler. Her family lives in a neighborhood called Chisty Koach, close to the banks of a branch of the Jhelum River in Srinagar. The family's ancestral home is in an area in the Old City of Srinagar called Maharaj Ganj. During a large-scale fire under Maharaja Ranbir Singh's rule (1857-1885), their home is burnt down.[390] Her paternal grandfather and his brother move to Chisty Koach, where their maternal home is located. On both sides of her family, Shamla traces her *peer* lineage to religious scholars and teachers. While sharing a copy of her family tree in the text, she also adds that her father's ancestor, Mullah Mohammad, was a close associate of a popular sixteenth-century Kashmiri saint, Makhdoom Sahib, for whom a shrine is named in Srinagar.[391] Her mother's family is affiliated with the prominent Chisty Sufi order. On her maternal side, her ancestor, Sheikh Muhammad Ali Chisty, obtained his training from the order and would "do *dhikr* in a loud voice," so that his friends and loved ones were also made aware of the practices of the order. Sheikh Chisty was also responsible for showing the hair of the prophet on important religious occasions at the Hazratbal Shrine. Shamla's father is a teacher in an Islamic school and her mother, although she was never formally schooled, read the Quran, which she taught to her children.

Throughout her narrative, when recalling her memories of Srinagar city, Shamla shares the names of important shrines and religious spaces, and their significance for Kashmiri Muslims. For example, she mentions the bazaar named after Saeed Ali Akbar Sahib, another Sufi saint whose grave is in that area. When speaking of her in-law's home, she provides details of

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[390] Shamla Mufti, *Chilman se Chaman,* 22.
[391] Ibid, 21.

the nearby Jamia Masjid, which serves as an important gathering place for followers of the Mirwaiz, a title given to the preacher of the mosque and spiritual leader for Kashmiri Muslims. Her in-laws are involved in the work of "fatwagiri" or giving religious opinions. Most of the life narratives stress an Islamic genealogy and geography, contributing, I suggest, to a particular "Muslim" history of Kashmir, one that gets elided in official narratives—both scholarly and state-propogated--that either focus on the Hindu history of Kashmir or its syncretic history, based on *Kashmiriyat.* The desire to elide the other histories of Kashmir could be interpreted in two different ways. One, it is possible that this elision is a reflection of the exclusivist meanings that are now being given to Kashmiri identity; in other words, that this identity is synonomous with a sense of belonging to Islam or "Muslim-ness." While this interpretation is possible, it is not reflected by the respondents' discussion of their relationships with Pandits, which I go into below. Rather, I suggest that the desire on the part of these life narratives to focus on a "Muslim" history of Kashmir is to challenge the dominant narratives of shared, syncretic history, one that was a primary cornerstones of Naya Kashmir. As we have seen in the education chapter, a number of Kashmiri Muslims argued that this shared, syncretic history erased Kashmir's "Muslim" identity. Perhaps, the focus of these life narratives on that "Muslim" identity is to contest and reclaim that history.

As a young woman in the 1930s and 1940s, Shamla narrates how the notion of *khandan* played an important role in structuring social relations, and becomes especially visible when it came to marriage. However, Shamla views Kashmiri Muslims' strict adherence to notions of *khandan* as a major societal constraint. Private and public norms of etiquette are expected of *khandani* men and women in terms of dress, speech, and space. To be a *khandani* woman means that you could not leave your house alone, even to buy vegetables at a local market. *Khandani*

women wear a *burqa* when they are outside the home and only travel with male guardians. During weddings, they wear special jewelry. The demarcation between the public and the private is less fluid for *khandani* women than it is for non-*khandani* women. The latter, in addition to housework, also work at stores or in the farms alongside men. Norms of *khandan* are placed on both males and females. *Khandani* men are also expected to follow certain behavioral codes. Outside their homes, their heads are to be covered. They are also restricted from performing menial labor. Furthermore, when a *khandani* family is considering a marriage proposal, it is considered ominous to marry into a non-*khandani* family. Incidents of inter-marriage are rare, as each group only marries within their own type.[392] Shamla states how marrying into a non-*khandani* family is seen as going against the traditions of their ancestors. Education, wealth, and compatibility between the boy and girl are given less importance in the decision.

Norms of *khandan* also took on an additional class dimension in Kashmir. As Zahid G. Muhammad, a writer and columnist for *Greater Kashmir* who has published a memoir of his experiences living in downtown, narrated to me, “it became any issue of working class…carpenter, bakers, artisans, peasants…versus the elite.” In rural areas, the working class was not interested in marrying into a *peer* family; this is because they saw them as not earning since “they depended on the peasants for alms at harvest.” In the city, however, the *peers* had associated themselves with local networks of power and patronage. As we will later see, it is the shifts in attitudes towards *khandan* that Shamla, and a number of other respondents, see as an important development in dismantling social hierarchies under Naya Kashmir.

While most of the life narratives began with the Dogra period, a few went as far back as the Mughal period in Kashmir, describing it as starting Kashmirs’ “foreign rule.” Their narrative followed a historical account of the Mughals, and then recalled the “repressive Afghan and Sikh

[392] Interview with Author, Zahid Ghulam Muhammad.

rules." The discussion of Dogra rule began with the "sale" of Kashmir to the Dogra ruler through the Treaty of Amritsar in 1846. It continued with a few key moments, including the "shawlbaf protest," during which 28 shawl weavers were killed at the hands of the Dogra army for protesting against unjust taxation in 1865; the submission of a memorandum in 1924 by a number of Kashmiri Muslim elites to British Viceroy Lord Reading, highlighting the stark conditions of the Muslims; and finally, the events around 1931, what is known as the beginning of the Kashmiri freedom struggle against Dogra rule.[393] In one such example, Shamla describes how the children would be able to see Haji Rather's bridge from their home, and hear of the "shawlbaf protest" from their elders, marking an important incident in the history of Dogra oppression against Kashmiri Muslims. According to her elders, a Kashmiri Pandit ran the shawl factory, taking a tax of five rupees of the eight a shawl weaver would earn. When the weavers attempted to meet with the government to speak of this injustice, the officials denied them the meeting. They started a procession, and the Dogra army attempted to stop it. On the bridge, the army fired, and a number of them were thrown into the Jhelum river and drowned. Shamla describes this incident as the first in a long line of revolts against injustice, which became the shape of a full-fledged movement in 1931.[394]

Whether a Kashmiri Muslim's family background was *khandani* or not, a vast majority of the life narratives referred to the repressive rule of the Dogras for *all* Muslims. They spoke of the Muslim peasants' economic exploitation under the feudal system and lack of education. The educated class complained of discrimination when seeking employment.[395] Many mentioned that their family members went outside Kashmir to places like Lahore in Punjab for better

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[393] Shamla Mufti, for example, discusses the *shawlbaf* protest in her autobiography, while Sheikh Abdullah and Mir Qasim refer to the other incidents. During most of my oral interviews, reference was made to one or more of these important historical events in Kashmiri history.
[394] Shamla Mufti, *Chilman se Chaman,* 24
[395] Sheikh Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar.*

educational and economic prospects.[396] And while Kashmiri Pandits also complained of being discriminated against under the Dogras—as evidenced by the state-subject movement of the 1920's—in these life narratives, Dogra rule was not simply oppressive towards Kashmiris, but in particular, towards Kashmiri Muslims. I suggest that this is because in the 1930s and 1940s, when most of the respondents were still coming of age, the state-subject movement had gained traction. Pandits were much more represented in the state's administration as well as in schools and colleges. In addition, the mostly Muslim peasantry was suffering under heavy taxation. As a result, Dogra oppression was seen as exclusively being meted out to Kashmiri Muslims, which allowed for a sense of a shared history of struggle.

The struggle against Dogra rule was a common theme in all of the narratives; some of the individuals who had reached early adulthood during that period also wrote or spoke of their own involvement in the struggle against the Maharaja, while others recalled what they perceived as "Muslim backwardness" in that period. This enables us to see how some parts of Naya Kashmir were indeed transformative for Kashmiri Muslims. Syed Mir Qasim declared that he was "born at a time when the mountains of Kashmir echoed with the sighs and wails of the helpless subjects of the Maraharaja Hari Singh's repressive rule…every shanty had a tale of hunger and tyranny."[397] By situating himself in the Kashmiri freedom struggle, Qasim attempted to provide legitimacy to his narrative. He continued that he was only fourteen years old when he "raised the banner of revolt against a rich landlord who had exited his poor tenant from his house. [He] collected a big crowd and made his first public speech…incident gave [him] confidence in own oratory and catapulted [him] into politics with a missionary zeal."[398]

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[396] Interview with Author, Pirzada Hafizullah Makhdoomi.
[397] Mir Qasim, *My Life and Times,* v
[398] Ibid.

By both situating themselves within a broader Islamic lineage and spiritual geography in Kashmir, and also foregrounding the condition of Kashmiri Muslims in the pre-1947 period, the life narratives I collected shared some striking similarities in how they began, and how they provided context for an individual's life. They situated themselves firmly within a larger moral and cultural universe of Islam, and recalled their experiences by speaking to a shared sense of a Kashmiri Muslim community, one that had it's own "history," with key dates, places and events that had shaped its trajectory in the late nineteenth and twentieth century. They also explicitly rejected a shared Kashmiri Muslim and Pandit backwardness under the Dogras.

In some sense, the life narratives of these Kashmiri Muslims stand in contrast to those of Muslims in India in the contemporary period, signalling a divergent trajectory for Kashmir's Muslims in comparison to their counterparts in the rest of India. Take, for example, the Bengali Muslim women Mahua Sarkar interviewed in Calcutta. While some do assert their religious and cultural ties to Islam, they appeared "to be firmly ensconced with a more self-conscious identification with the Indian nation."[399] Some women downplayed their religious affiliation by making it sound like happenstance, which Sarkar analyses as a "dialogic response to the increasingly communalized political discourse and a growing expressed intolerance of minorities in general, and Muslims in particular in the closing years of the twentieth century in India."[400] In the life narratives of the Kashmiri Muslims, the desire to assert a "Muslim" identity and history was, perhaps, also in response to the same communalized political discourse. However, these individuals wanted to highlight their sense of "difference," in opposition or outright rejection of the exigencies of an Indian national identity, not their "loyalty to the nation." This shared sense of a particular history today, however, did not entail that the community had always held an

[399] Sarkar, *Visible Histories, Disappearing Women,* 147
[400] Ibid.

ideological coherence. Indeed, we will see how ideological divergences marked Kashmir's transition from colonial to postcolonial rule.

From Jinnah to Nehru: Ideological Divergence and the Complexity of Partition

Scholarship surrounding Partition in Kashmir revolves around Sheikh Abdullah and the National Conference, and their alliance with Jawaharlal Nehru and the Indian National Congress. While some scholars mention the role of the Muslim Conference, which was a pro-Pakistan party, Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah and his followers are seen as a minority voice in the Valley whose Muslims clearly denounced the two-nation theory, and were behind Sheikh Abdullah. The disappearance of those who espoused an alternative politics from the archives, and thus, from most scholarly work, is a defining trait of most scholarship, but is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, the story that emerges from the life narratives speaks to a much more complicated series of loyalties and allegiances, a story that exists, as it were, in popular memory.

As mentioned in the introduction, it is important to remember here that the National Conference emerged from the Muslim Conference, in an attempt by Sheikh Abdullah to secularize the future direction of the freedom struggle against Dogra rule. Thus, many members of the National Conference were initially the founders of the Muslim Conference, and still held many of the same ideas as before, but went along with the Sheikh for strategic purposes. After the creation of the National Conference, the Muslim Conference was not active for some years, but became active once again in the early 1940s, especially in Jammu, under the leadership of Chowdhary Ghulam Abbas, a Muslim leader from Jammu. The life narratives did not provide a definitive demographic of each groups' supporters, but they do suggest that the Muslim Conference also had a presence in the Valley. It appeared that the Muslim Conference enjoyed a stronghold in the Old City of Srinagar from a more traditional elite class of Muslims or from

rural Muslim landlords who were opposed to the National Conferences' emphasis on land reform. Many of these were *khandani* families, often with Sufi backgrounds. The National Conference, on the other hand, enjoyed ascendency with the more left-leaning *newly* educated classes, those who were not necessarily from *khandani* backgrounds. In *Chilman se Chaman*, Shamla described this as the sher (lion) – bakra (sheep) split (lions were supporters of Sheikh Abdullah and the National Conference, while the sheep were supporters of Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah and the Muslim Conference). She described her in-laws, with whom she lived for much of her early married life, as being supporters of the Muslim Conference, and narrated how the men and women would go to the Jamia Masjid every Friday to hear the Mirwaiz's sermon.[401] She recalled one particular incident when Muhammad Ali Jinnah of the Muslim League visited Kashmir in 1944. In front of nearly a hundred thousand people, he spoke at the Jamia Masjid, propagating the two-nation theory. Shamla remembered how she and the women of the house also attended the speech, and saw Fatima Jinnah, his sister, sitting in their midst.[402]

Qari Saifuddin, one of the founders of the Jamaat-i-Islam in Kashmir, considered himself a supporter of the National Conference until he attended Jinnah's speech. In his autobiography, he stated that Jinnah's historic address "changed the way of thinking of the educated class, with the two-nation theory being acceptable, but a large majority here were still holding the flag of the National Conference."[403] The reasons, he continued, were twofold: one, the National Conference "tarnished the reputation of the educated Muslims place to place by calling them "government agents" or "beggars of government jobs"—unfortunately, educated Muslims were very rare and

[401] Shamla Mufti, C*hilman se Chaman,* 97.
[402] Jinnah's visit to Kashmir in 1944 was a critical moment in defining National Conference's alliance with the Indian National Congress. Jinnah was hosted by both parties—the National Conference and the Muslim Conference, but purportedly did not get along with Sheikh Abdullah, and during his speech to the Muslim Conference at Jamia Masjid, affirmed that they were the main representatives of Kashmiri Muslims, which angered the National Conference party leaders.
[403] Qari Saifuddin, *Vadi-i-Purkhar*, 22.

few in number." Second, he stated that except for a few workers of the Muslim Conference, the rest "only talked and did nothing. Practically, they proved to be useless and untrustworthy." Indeed, a number of respondents mentioned that Muslim Conference leaders were in the Dogra Administration in the 1940s and were not as anti-monarchical as the National Conference.

For those Kashmiri Muslims who founded and became active in the National Conference, the struggle against Dogra rule and left-leaning influences played an important role in shaping their politics. Many of them studied outside Kashmir in the 1930s and 1940s, and were influenced by political trends in the subcontinent. Dr. Mir Nazir Ahmed, who studied medicine in Lucknow in the 1950s, shared the story of his father, Mir Ghulam Rasool, who was one of two Muslims selected by the Maharaja to go to Harvard for engineering in the 1930s. He spoke to me of the other Kashmiri Muslims, mostly men, who went to Aligarh and Lahore for their studies: "The air was thick with Quit India," he stated, "they got caught up in it." When describing his father and his fathers' colleagues' initial support for the National Conference, he explained:

> They developed a dichotomy in their thoughts…they would recite Alamma Iqbal and go into a trance with his poetry, at the same time, they were influenced by Mahatma Gandhi and Satyagraha. These were antagonistic views. Only few had a clear-cut idea of what they would want. My father was caught up in this middle…this is what happened to most Kashmiris who were educated.[404]

For Dr. Nazir, an attraction to Iqbal and Gandhi is seen today as "antagonistic views," given the diverging trajectories of both of their ideologies over time. Whether it was seen as antagonistic for people at the time is less clear. Even Sheikh Abdullah, who aligned his politics with the Indian National Congress affirmed his appreciation for Iqbal, even naming a building in the University of Kashmir after him. For the Sheikh, being committed to Islam did not mean that one could not be a secular nationalist. In fact, he declared that his nationalist convictions came from

[404] Interview with Author, Mir Nazir Ahmed.

the Quran.[405] This perspective, of course, is not so different from those Muslim leaders in India who aligned themselves with the Indian National Congress, such as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulana Husssain Ahmed Madani. As some respondents clarified, a number of Kashmiri Muslims were attracted to the progressive aims of the Indian National Congress, as well as its purported secularism, as they knew they needed the help and support of Kashmiri Pandits in their fight against the Dogras. Crucially, they also believed, or were led to believe, that they would be able to enjoy autonomy in an independent India. In their eyes, the feudal interests that were backing the Muslim League would not allow Kashmiris to enact land reforms and other progressive policies in the state. Aside from these ideological concerns, I also gathered from these narratives that the National Conference was seen as the more modern party: at a time when Kashmir's Muslims were desperate to catch up with the rest of the world, the National Conference was ideally situated to bring Muslims out of their purported backwardness. As Qari Saifuddin noted in his autobiography, "in those days it was very rare to see the educated youngsters who had a beard, a majority, rather a big majority of educated people were ashamed to have a beard. They thought it was a sign of backwardness and ignorance. They felt proud to shave it off."[406] The beard, in this case, symbolized "tradition," a physical marker of Muslim-ness that must be removed in order to cultivate a particular modern sensibility.

Most of the life narratives acknowledged Sheikh Abdullah's popularity at the time of Partition, especially given the National Conferences' anti-monarchical campaign. Yet, some of my interviewees clarified that support for Sheikh Abdullah did not necessarily entail support for the Indian National Congress, or India. Indeed, a few shared with me how a number of National Conference leaders were firmly against the accession. One was Anwar Ashai, a retired engineer

[405] Sheikh Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar*.
[406] Qari Saifuddin, *Vadi-i-Purkhar*, 31.

and former student activist. He was part of one of the first classes to study engineering at the National Institute of Technology, the engineering college set up by Bakshi in the late 1950s. Anwar was also the son of Ghulam Ahmed Ashai, an educationist, who was seen as being a close associate of the Sheikh and was instrumental in the creation of the University of Kashmir, of which he served as the registrar during the Sheikh's government (1947-1953). Anwar's father was one of the few Muslims who served in the Maharaja's administration, but was also involved in the Muslim Conference, and later, in the National Conference. Although his government employment did not allow him to fully take part in the NC, as a senior Muslim official, he would give its members advice and help them with their statements. However, Anwar recalled that his father was not attracted to the socialist leanings of the National Conference, but rather its emphasis on empowering Kashmiri Muslims, especially through education. Ghulam Ahmed Ashai came from a prominent *khandani* family, which had ties to the Naqshband Sufi order. He stood first in his Master's in Persian at Aligarh. Anwar told me how his father had travelled to various cities in India before Partition. According to Anwar, his father "became aware of the insecurity of Muslims in India, he had seen it firsthand, he knew it would not be good for Kashmir."[407] He was skeptical of the sincerity of the Indian nationalist leadership towards Kashmir, and attempted to persuade Sheikh Abdullah against aligning the National Conference with them, but as Anwar recalled, the Sheikh was too "lured by power." Ghulam Ahmad Ashai was also not drawn to Pakistan; Anwar believed that his father would have preferred an independent Kashmir.

The confusion that Kashmiri Muslims faced around the time of Partition, and their varying attraction to and skepticism of the two main parties, was a recurring theme in most of the life narratives. What we can make from this "confusion" however is that support for either party

[407] Interview with Author, Anwar Ashai.

was based on a series of local concerns, whether it be the consolidation of class interests, the desire for empowerment, or the desire to end monarchical rule. It was not *only* linked to the divisions between the Muslim League and the Indian National Congress in the subcontinent, although it was, at various points, informed by it. Nonetheless, when the time for Partition came, it was the impending tribal raid that drew a number of Kashmiri Muslims into the fold of the National Conference and its defense against the raid. They felt that they had no choice; they had heard reports of the tribals' brutality and were prepared to defend Kashmir against aggression. This did not mean, however, that they sided with India, as we will see. Those Muslims who were staunchly pro-Pakistan, or aligned with the Muslim Conference voluntarily went across the border to Pakistan, or were forcibly sent there by the Sheikh's government. Anwar's two brothers, who were against the National Conference, despite their father's close ties with the Sheikh, went to Pakistan. Anwar narrated how the elder brother, Ghulam Qadir, was harassed and beaten by National Conference supporters in Aligarh and subsequently fled to Pakistan, knowing that the party would soon gain power in Kashmir.[408] Sheikh Abdullah tried to bribe the second brother, Yasin, by telling him he would send him to London for further study. After the second brother rejected the bribe, the Sheikh arrested him and forcibly sent him to Pakistan in a convoy through Suchetgarh in Punjab, near the border between the two countries, along with "thousands of other Kashmiris who the Sheikh saw as a threat."[409]

Most of these narratives suggested a locally driven class-based ideological rivalry between varying Muslim groups in Kashmir before Partition, highlighting ideological fissures

[408] Syed Mir Qasim and a number of other life narratives mentioned how the ideological dispute between supporters of the MC and the NC manifested itself amongst the Kashmiri students in Aligarh in the 1940s. Supporters of the Muslim Conference had created a "JK Muslim Students Union," while National Conference supporters began a campaign against the nomenclature and effectively got the name changed to "JK Aligarh Student's Union." There were a number of fights and clashes between the two groups.
[409] Interview with Author, Anwar Ashai.

that is also reflected in this scholarship of this period. However, as we will see below, my respondents stated that in the post-Partition period, the brutality of Sheikh Abdullah's government towards its dissenters, in addition to India's increasing interference in Kashmir's affairs (outside of the involvement in defense, foreign policy, and communications as marked by the Treaty of Accession) and Hindu nationalist politics in Jammu and elsewhere, led many Kashmiri Muslims, even those that were previously open to the limited accession, to desire an alternative political arrangement.[410] Yet, as I detail, fear and the contingent nature of this period made it difficult for many of them to act.

Pakistan, the Aftermath of Accession, and Contingencies After the Sheikh's Arrest

When trying to get a sense of the ideological shifts that occurred after partition, I was struck by the ways in which my interviewees spoke of their perspectives after partition, which to me, appeared to be in conflict with their public personas as members of the seemingly pro-Indian bureaucratic class. Although a number of the life narratives referred to the "confusion" faced by Kashmiri Muslims before the accession and the multiple influences that were at play in shaping their ideology, a vast majority of them described how a majority of Kashmiri Muslims, including those who considered themselves to be more secular, were pro-Pakistan in the aftermath of the accession, and especially after the Sheikh's arrest. To be sure, recollecting this "memory" could be influenced by the contemporary moment, which is marked by increased anti-India sentiments in the Valley. My respondents might not have felt comfortable divulging if they were, indeed, in support of India in the past. Incidentally, however, this perspective was shared by Karan Singh, the son of Maharaja Hari Singh and Governor of Kashmir, with Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in the 1950s. In a collection of his letters to Nehru, Karan Singh repeatedly expressed his misgivings surrounding the loyalties of Kashmiri Muslim bureaucrats, calling upon

[410] Chitrelekha Zutshi also makes this argument. See *Zutshi, Languages of Belonging,* 314.

Nehru to increase central representation in Kashmir's bureaucracy.[411] Nonetheless, many Kashmiri Muslims went on to take various postings in the Bakshi administration after Sheikh Abdullah's arrest. This may seem bewildering at first, given Bakshi's strong pro-Indian stance, but must be understood in the context of post-Partition developments in Kashmir.

At the time of the tribal raid, Sheikh Abdullah wrote in his autobiography that the perspective of Pakistan had been tarnished amongst Kashmiri Muslims.[412] Yet, nearly all of my respondents mentioned that most of the Muslims in Kashmir during Bakshi's rule, aside from the senior National Conference leadership, were pro-Pakistan. The reasons for this ranged widely—some believed that Muslims would be safe in Pakistan and could "progress," while others were dismayed by Hindu right wing politics in India, which had reached their borders in the form of the Praja Parishad in Jammu. The most common factor, however, was that they became disillusioned by increasing Indian interference in Kashmir, including the Indian hand in Sheikh Abdullah's arrest. As many respondents mentioned, the events of August 1953 solidified anti-Indian sentiment amongst many Kashmiri Muslims. Even Syed Mir Qasim, former Chief Minister, in his autobiography, declared "the faith of people in Kashmir in democracy and in rule of constitution had shaken…when Sheikh was disposed." Agha Ashraf, a prominent educationist, added that with the arrest of the Sheikh, "the whole Kashmir had erupted, there were demonstrations from morning until evening in every part of Kashmir, and people in herds joined these processions. This was a type of referendum."[413] Agha Ashraf isn't clear what this "referendum" was for. It could have been in favor of Pakistan, but it is also possible that it was

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411 Jawaid Alam, *Jammu and Kashmir 1949-1964: Select Correspondence Between Jawaharlal Nehru and Karan Singh (*New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2006) 124-125, 141
412 Sheikh Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar,* 363.
413 Agha Ashraf Ali, *Kuch to Likhye.*

simply a referendum against India, suggesting that people's political desires might not have fit squarely into pro-India or pro-Pakistan stances.

The Sheikh had lost popularity during his time as Prime Minister for his repressive policies against dissenters as well as the economic crisis that had arisen. Nonetheless, his forced removal from power angered those who had previously been opposed to him, as it was seen as a direct assault on Kashmir's autonomy. As Ghulam Hassan Shah stated:

> At the time, we were all with Sheikh Sahib. When I got married in September 1953, the Sheikh had already been arrested. When we reached my wife's place, I was on a horse. They greeted us with, "Sher-i-Kashmir!" and everyone responded "Zindabad."[414] We used to think that the Sheikh would give us our freedom. We didn't know that he was pro-India; he had given people the impression that he will make it an independent Kashmir.[415]

Khalil Fazili, who was one of the Kashmiris that went to Pakistan in October 1948, met me in Srinagar, where he was visiting his family and friends. Khalil was working with the Dogras before Partition, but had a number of issues with his employer. In his words:

> At the time, most people were with Pakistan, they felt that Muslims would be safe there. There was no thinking of an Islamic state…People who went to Pakistan were starting to feel insecure about their positions in Kashmir. They saw that the Pandits had all the jobs, Muslims were discriminated against. So they moved. They had the idea that they would do well professionally, for their families, their futures…and there were so many historical connections between Lahore and Kashmir. People had businesses there, it made more sense for people to go there.

Khalil mentioned that his reason for going to Pakistan was also because of discrimination in Kashmir; it was not for any religious reason as he was more "secular minded."[416] Khalil's desire to assert himself as a secular Muslim, here, is important, as is his mention of an "Islamic state." He provided a list of reasons for why Kashmiris were attracted to Pakistan; none of them were drawn from any sort of "religious ideology." He repeated this point a number of times, perhaps

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[414] Sher-i-Kashmir was the name given to Sheikh Abdullah, and meant the "Lion of Kashmir."
[415] Interview with Author, Ghulam Hassan Shah.
[416] Interview with Author, Khalil Fazili, Srinagar, 7 Jun. 2014.

to contest Indian and Pakistani nationalist tropes that foreground religious ideology as being determinant of people's choices in this time. Furthermore, in today's global context that has increasingly been defined by the War on Terror, many Kashmiri Muslims did not feel comfortable foregrounding that they desired an "Islamic state" at that time. For them, Pakistan represented a state where "Muslims would be safe," rather than one defined by a particular religious ideology. This question has undoubtedly been debated in the historiography of the Pakistan state.[417] Whatever the shift in the ideology of the Pakistan state may be today, Khalil reiterates that his idea of Pakistan *then,* did not entail what Pakistan is *now* (a state that is increasingly defined by its religious ideology)*:* "no one had imagined Partition and what would happen. They had no idea about Muslim state or Islamic state…they didn't know what that would bring them."[418]

Ghulam Hassan Shah also mentioned to me that:

> Kashmiri Muslims in the bureaucracy wanted to go to Pakistan. They were all of the same view…they thought that it was better for Kashmir to go to Pakistan because it was a Muslim country, we would be safe there, and because Indian Hindus had started showing their teeth one way or another. They used to understand that…but ultimately what prevailed was something else.[419]

While Shah did not clarify what he meant by "showing their teeth," I took it to mean that despite "Indian Hindu" deference to secularism, many Kashmiri Muslims perceived that they were, in fact, communal. This perception animated a number of my conversations, as many made reference to the contemporary state of communal tensions in India exacerbated by the rise of the BJP and right-wing politics. The discussion of contemporary politics in Pakistan was much more

[417] See, for example, Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League, and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Farzana Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India 1860-1947* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Venkat Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina: State Power, Islam, and the Quest for Pakistan in Late Colonial North India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).
[418] Interview with Author, Khalil Fazili.
[419] Ibid.

unsettled. A number of my respondents became defensive, arguing that had Kashmir gone to Pakistan at the time, the country would not be in "the state it is today."[420] They argued that Pakistan, "despite its problems," was the only country that raised the issue of Kashmir internationally. Others suggested their indignation at the contemporary political malaise in *both* India and Pakistan, arguing that neither country had the best interests of Kashmiris in mind and had exploited the issue to serve their own national interests. An important contrast, however, emerges from their discussion of both countries. While most respondents were able to differentiate between their impressions of Pakistan *then*, versus Pakistan *today*, their perspectives on India after Sheikh Abdullah's arrest appeared to be consistent overtime.

Khalil mentioned "the historical connections between Lahore and Kashmir," as one of the reasons why Kashmiris were more attracted to Pakistan, which was reiterated by a number of respondents. One of the biggest changes they encountered after Partition was that they were no longer able to travel to places like Lahore and Rawalpindi, where a number of them had gone for higher education or business. This was one of the primary closures of the post-Partition period. The loss of ties to the regions that became Pakistan was described in both emotional and material terms. Many families had individuals who left for Pakistan, or were exiled there, and were unable to see their family members for long stretches of time. In his autobiography, Agha Ashraf recalled his trip to Lahore with his grandfather, and how "modern" it seemed to him after coming from Srinagar. It was in Lahore, he stated, that he "used a fork and knife for the first time."[421] Some mentioned how Kashmiris would use rock salt from Pakistan, which stopped coming to Kashmir, leading to a shortage of salt in the first few years after Partition.[422] Rock salt and a green handkerchief became an important political symbol for Pakistan; indeed, leaders of the

[420] Interview with Author, Mir Nazir Ahmed.
[421] Agha Ashraf Ali, *Kuch to Likhye,* 12.
[422] Interview with Author, Anwar Ashai.

Plebiscite Front would raise both the salt and the handkerchief in rallies and tell those who were gathered, "This is our foundation."[423] Furthermore, Zahid G. Mohammad stated that Kashmir's historic economic ties to Central Asia went through Pakistan. Timber and fruit would be transported along the Jhelum and into other parts of Central Asia. Kashmiri businessmen suffered great losses when this route was blocked after 1947. Nighat Shafi, who runs a non-government organization, and was one of the granddaughters of Ghulam Ahmad Ashai, mentioned that her grandmother would keep asking the other family members when the road to Pakistan would open again.

Dr. Naseer Shah, the former principal of the Government Medical College in Srinagar, was studying in Lahore at the King Edward Medical College at the time of Partition, and was repatriated to Srinagar. Because of the heightened sense of insecurity at the time, he explained his fear that Pakistani officials might see him as a spy. His sister, who was one of the first Kashmiri Muslim women to get educated in Lahore, Miss Mahmooda Ali Shah, and was involved with the National Conference, told Nehru to speak to Liaqat Ali Khan and ask that her brother to be sent back to Srinagar safely. Dr. Naseer is known amongst this class of individuals for being one of the few Kashmiri Muslim men to marry a Kashmiri Pandit woman. Dr. Naseer's wife, Dr. Girja Dhar, is also a prominent doctor in the Valley. They met, and married in London, where they had lived for some years for work. Dr. Naseer explained that his family was "secular" and "open-minded" and did not subscribe to the Muslim Conference, but they still wanted to be with Pakistan. He explained:

> We were all fascinated to be a part of Pakistan. No one was sure what would happen, but most of us were educated in Lahore. Rawalpindi was next door. It cost 10 rupees to go there on government transport. The bus would leave Srinagar at 9am, and arrive in Rawalpindi at 3pm. The drivers knew my family…sometimes we even got a free ride.

[423] Interview with Author, Pirzada Hafizullah Makhdoomi.

> None of us ever thought of Delhi…it was so far. From Delhi, the newspaper would come after four days. But the papers from Lahore would be here the next morning.[424]

If so many Kashmiri Muslims of this class were opposed to the accession, and wanted to join Pakistan at the time, why did they continue to take part in the bureaucracy, especially after Sheikh Abdullah's arrest? I posed this question to my interviewees. In their responses, most referred to the precarious nature of their decision at this time. This uncertainty has been referred to by a number of South Asian historians, including Neeti Nair. In her book, *Changing Homelands: Hindu Politics and the Partition of India*, which contests essentialist understandings of Muslims and Hindus, Nair describes how none of her interviewees, mostly Hindu refugees from Pakistan, believed that they would have to "leave forever." This "'moment of reckoning,' the decision to leave their homeland for a new political configuration or nation lasted a few hours for some, several months for others…But the memory of the contingent quality of that decision to leave stayed," she states.[425] People continued to "believe that they would return after this sudden spate of violence ended."[426] Similarly, Vazira Zamindar examines the contingent nature of defining citizenship, as people transversed borders, through passport regimes in the immediate post-partition period in India and Pakistan.[427]

What were these uncertainties in the case of Kashmir? A majority of my interviewees told me that people did not think that the *halaat,* or situation, would go on indefinitely.[428] Even after the Sheikh was arrested, they assumed that since the matter was raised in the United Nations Security Council, India and Pakistan would resolve the issue and a plebiscite would soon

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[424] Interview with Author, Dr. Naseer Shah, Srinagar, 25. June 2014.
[425] Neeti Nair, *Changing Homelands: Hindu Politics and the Partition of India* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011) 220.
[426] Neeti Nair, *Changing Homelands: Hindu Politics and the Partition of India,* 224
[427] Vazira Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).
[428] My respondents used the term "halaat" to generally speak of the Kashmir conflict, and the political situation, whether it was referring to Naya Kashmir or in the contemporary period.

take place. In the meantime, my respondents felt that they must get educated, build the infrastructure in the region, and remain employed in the bureaucracy. The realization that things could soon change was also exemplified by their desire to remain in the Valley, and not be transferred to other places in the state, including Jammu. Nighat Shafi told me "a lot of Kashmiri Muslims didn't agree to be posted in Jammu…because they thought that things would change and Kashmir might go to Pakistan." Besides this, many were afraid of being in a Hindu-majority place, as they had "heard that none of the Hindus rent their houses to Muslims." In another example, M.A. Chisti, who served as a registrar in the University of Kashmir, revealed that he "didn't agree to go to Jammu because of the threat…Many Muslims were scared by the killings of thousands of innocent Muslims there." Chisti was referring to the events of 1947, when the state massacred nearly two hundred thousand Jammu Muslims who had rebelled against Dogra rule.[429]

As mentioned in the first chapter, the Kashmiri state also conducted propaganda about political and social developments in Pakistan, which may have also impacted my respondent's decision to remain in the bureaucracy and go along with Bakshi's government after the Sheikh's arrest. The Department of Information gathered material that highlighted how the Pakistani state was beholden to imperial—namely American—interests and was also interfering in the politics of Azad Kashmir. This perception was oftentimes affirmed by letters that were sent between Kashmiris residing in Pakistan and their families in the Valley. I came across one letter sent by Ghulam Ahmad Ashai to his son Ghulam Qadir, who had been exiled to Pakistan by Sheikh Abdullah. The letter is dated August 8, 1952, and was sent from Raj Bagh, in Srinagar, to Bohar Bazaar, in Rawalpindi. I came across the letter at the National Archives of India, one of the rare archival materials on Kashmir after 1924 that is accessible to researchers. I quote the letter in

[429] Christopher Snedden, *The Untold History*.

full, as it speaks to an increasing disillusionment with conditions in Pakistan that may have persuaded a number of educated Kashmiris to reconsider their fate with India. In the letter, Ghulam Ahmad Ashai wrote of his meeting with his relatives, G.K Drabu:

> I have not met G.K. Drabu yet, but to those who he had met, he has given me a really grim and woeful picture of the state of affairs on that side and of the moral and social degradation which is rampant in your country. His account of your and Yasin's life also is not such as could give any satisfaction to any parent. I wish to God that you may be still be saved from the vicious and undesirable habits that seem to be so common there. G.K. Drabu's own habits so exhibited here make me tremble for both of you. It seems that your country is taking the lead in practicing everything and the utmost that is both un-Islamic and immoral. However, so long as your present mood lasts, I feel myself utterly helpless and can only pray to God that he may keep you safe even in that filthy atmosphere. If the treatment of the rulers to our people there is insulting as stated by Yasin and confirmed by Drabu, why in the name of heaven do people like you suffer this insult and stay on. The only honorable course in such circumstance would be to give up everything, come home and carry on a relentless struggle against the designs of those people by exposing them naked to those who still may have any misunderstanding about them. After all, if it is to be subservience, better have it until there is some respect attached to it. The greatest justification for the stand taken up by the party in power here is the treatment that our people are… (undecipherable)…over there, even in conditions when they had need in fact keen and urgent need of the utmost goodwill of our people. I wonder how they would behave if they obtained power here.

While Ghulam Ahmad Ashai did not state explicitly what concerned him, it appears that far from being a "safe place for Muslims," these reports from family members who had travelled to or lived in Pakistan spoke of "moral and social degradation" in that "filthy atmosphere." Aside from these moral concerns, Ashai also made reference to the "treatment of the rulers to our people there." It is possible Ashai was referring to the shift in the Pakistani leadership's approach to the province in 1952. As Christopher Snedden carefully details, Pakistan-administered Kashmir, which initially enjoyed some autonomy as a province, came into the fold of Pakistan's Ministry of Kashmir Affairs, which allowed the Pakistani state's interests in the region to remain paramount.[430] For this reason, perhaps, Ashai urged his son to come back to the Kashmir Valley, and let those who still had faith in the Pakistani state know of the developments on the other side

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[430] Christopher Snedden, *The Untold History.*

of the border. It might not be far-fetched to assume that these discussions permeated throughout the educated class, given that many of them had family members who were in Pakistan, and led a number of individuals to forego their initial support for Pakistan.

The contingencies of the period were also marked by financial insecurity. A number of bureaucrats spoke of their financial concerns at the time, not dissimilar from the writers and poets that I wrote about in the third chapter. In one case, Abdul Sattar Mir, who was a secretary in the bureaucracy, acknowledged the poverty and financial strain that informed his, and many others' decision to get a government job.[431] Financial insecurity and the reign of fear that pervaded the state, both under the Sheikh and Bakshi, were the two primary reasons that many bureaucrats stated they remained "silent" on the political developments in Kashmir.

Even those belonging to parties that were ostensibly against the state, such as the Jamaat-i-Islam, were also beholden to its patronage and had to "compromise" due to financial need. Qari Saifuddin wrote in his autobiography how his friend, Syed Qaiser Qalander, worked as a program assistant at Radio Kashmir. Qalander asked Saifuddin to broadcast a radio program on Islam. The chief of the Jamaat-i-Islam party at the time, Saad Uddin, informed Saifuddin that he should not go on the state-run radio as "it would be a meaningless effort of patching the truth with falsehood and it will give no benefit to religion."[432] Nevertheless, Saifuddin mentioned how his father became ill and he had to pay for his sister's wedding, leaving him with little financial means. Under these conditions, Saad Uddin allowed Saifuddin to accept the position at Radio Kashmir, which temporarily resolved his financial problems. He noted however, that while he was to speak on the life of the Prophet Muhammad, he was told not to mention particular incidents that might rouse public sentiment, such as the Battle of Badr, a key battle in the early

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[431] Interview with Author, Abdul Sattar Mir, Srinagar, 29 Aug. 2014.
[432] Qari Saifuddin, *Vadi-i-Purkhar,* 36.

days of Islam, in which the Prophet's community won against his opponents, the tribe of Quraysh, in Mecca. In the eyes of officers at Radio Kashmir, perhaps speaking of a "Muslim" victory over non-Muslims would raise sentiments against India in the region.

When speaking to former bureaucrats, many of them reiterated that despite working in the bureaucracy, they had remained committed to empowering Kashmiri Muslims, and they had "no other options" at the time. Some said that had Kashmiri Muslims not taken an active part in the bureaucracy, the government would have relied upon Indians from throughout the country, "who would not have had Kashmiris best interests at heart," to formulate policy in the region.[433] Others stated that their jobs in the bureaucracy were apolitical, and were simply for purposes of administering. Ghulam Hassan Shah said that he "never did anything that would help the Government of India, so [he doesn't] feel bad." When Shah was in the Law Department, he maintained that he "translated and interpreted [the law] in ways that it would suit Kashmir…Never felt that I was doing what the Government of India wanted me to do." In this conversation, Shah mentioned an argument he had with Jagmohan, the infamous Governor of Kashmir, a few years before the militancy began. At the time, Shah was the Chairman of the Selection Board that hired individuals for various posts in the bureaucracy. He narrated that Jagmohan wanted him to hire more Kashmiri Pandits for various positions. Shah informed him that "ninety percent of the community is Muslim, and therefore they should get ninety percent of the postings."[434] As he remembered this incident, Shah stated that he had been afraid, but he told Jagmohan "to his face that he would not do anything that is wrong." He speaks of this moment with pride, as he felt that he had not succumbed or compromised his principles in the face of a Government of India official.

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[433] Interview with Author, Nighat Shafi Pandit.
[434] Interview with Author, Ghulam Hassan Shah.

As most of my respondents explained, there were very few Kashmiri Muslims that were "Indians by heart." Even those that were in the National Conference leadership, they stated, considered themselves Kashmiris first—being an "Indian" was a matter of practicality for them. Mushtaq Fazili, a retired engineer, who was sent by the government to study engineering in Bangalore, told me how he never identified as an Indian; he always identified as a Kashmiri Muslim. This is despite "religion not playing a big role in [his] family…more preference was given to education than going through rituals. The focus was on being a good human being." The only group that fully aligned themselves with India, Mushtaq mentioned, were the Kashmiri Pandits. "They always said they were the true Indians."[435] It is to the conflicted attitudes towards Kashmiri Pandits to which I turn next.

The voices that emerge from this section reflect the challenges of the early postcolonial period, and more importantly, showcase the ways in which my respondents negotiated their everyday realities under political uncertainty. Whether or not they viewed their decisions to participate in Bakshi's government as a "compromise" at the time, their recollections today express it as such, suggesting a greater sense of an ideological coherence over time. Almost all of my respondents recalled that people were anti-India, but participated in the state government and its institutions out of necessity.

On Kashmiri Pandits

Perhaps on no other topic did I receive as many conflicting accounts as on the relations between Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits. All of the life narratives referred to the "good" and "friendly" relations between members of the two communities, but were interspersed with accusations and feelings of betrayal that made me feel otherwise. This desire to assert ones positive relations with Pandit neighbors, friends, and colleagues must be situated in the context

[435] Interview with Author, Mushtaq Fazili, Srinagar, 24 Aug. 2014.

of fraught tensions between the two communities today, a lingering impact from the militancy and the forced departure of a majority of the Pandit community outside of Kashmir. My interviewees often tried to explain the absence of Pandits to me, and acutely reflected on the causes of the toxic relations today.

Most of my respondents recalled how they respected, and looked up to Kashmiri Pandits. Dr. Naseer mentioned how they were seen as being more cosmopolitan and educated than Kashmiri Muslims. Others mentioned how most of the good teachers were Kashmiri Pandits, as they were interested in their work, and the Muslim teachers "would not be as interested." Many families would hire Pandit teachers to give their children tuitions in various subjects, and unlike the Muslim teachers, the "Pandit teacher would make sure that the students would understand the material."[436] Pirzada Hafizullah Makhdoomi, who was a Political Conference activist at the time, mentioned how Pandits were the seat of Kashmiri culture and language, "which is now dying after they left." Neerja Mattoo, the only Kashmiri Pandit I spoke to, recalled how the Pandit and Muslim bureaucrats would mix—"they all came from downtown, were upwardly mobile, had a modern way of life. They were educated, lived in bungalows and brought land." She had many Muslim friends, and they didn't "even notice the difference," she repeated a few times. They would "watch films, wear the same clothes and hairstyles, and eat in each others homes." She clarified that the earlier generation would not eat together, but for her generation, it was "not an issue." Some Muslims also spoke of how Kashmiri Islam was unique because "we were originally Kashmiri Pandits…proud of the Sufi aspect of Kashmiri Islam which is mystical and draws upon Shaivism and Nund Rishi." While earlier, my respondents felt the need to assert a history of Kashmir that spoke directly to its Islamic past, when asked about Pandits, they unequivocally reiterated the important role of Pandits in Kashmir's cultural history, as well as

[436] Interview with Author, Ghulam Hassan Shah.

the “Sufi aspect of Kashmiri Islam.” This suggests that my respondents did not seek to elide other communities from Kashmir’s history, but rather assert a Muslim identity that they felt was being erased from dominant narratives.

Even those affiliated with Islamist politics, such as Qari Saifuddin, presented their relations with Pandits in Kashmir in a positive light. He saw Pandit officials as being honest, while the National Conference’s Muslim leaders were disingenuous. He mentioned how a Pandit lawyer, Jia Lal Chaudhary, defended him and others who were charged with engaging in a riot against the National Conference. At the same time, however, he noted his opposition to a cartoon that was printed in the paper, which showed the heads of the three main faiths in Kashmir—Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism— as being part of one body. Under the cartoon, it was written: “Naya Kashmir will be religion of Kashmiris, they look three, but they all are one.” Saifuddin said he found the statement to be intolerable:

> Is new Kashmir to be the religion of Kashmir?….In the evening I made this sentence and cartoon my topic of speech. I emotionally criticized the new Kashmir and the maker of new Kashmir. The audience was silent because in this area, to be vocally angry on Kashmir’s leadership, it’s like a blast which rocked the whole area.[437]

Despite the friendly relations between individual Muslim and Pandits, a number of my respondents referred to varying moments in recent history in which the relations between the two communities were challenged. M.A. Chisti described how 1931 played a pivotal role as that is when “the uprising of Kashmiri Muslims had begun.” He stated:

> There were a few incidents of misbehavior of Muslims with their Hindu neighbors, though they were very few, some of the Pandit neighbors and those living in other Muslim majority areas, preferred to move to Pandit dominated areas. Then in 1947, when tribesmen attacked the Valley, they moved to other places, some of them even to neighboring Punjab and Delhi. In 1990, there was almost complete exodus from the valley of Kashmiri Pandits. When they lived in the Valley though, Muslims had very good relations with them.[438]

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[437] Qari Saifuddin, *Vadi-i-Purkhar.*
[438] Interview with Author, M.A. Chishti, Srinagar, 27 Feb. 2014.

1947 was seen by some in a different light, however. As Ghulam Hassan Shah emotionally recalled, “Kashmiri Muslims protected all Hindus at the risk of their life…we can’t live without them. It didn’t even matter that they were all pro-Indian.” Nonetheless, he added that the situation changed after 1947, as Pandits began to see themselves as “Indian instead of Kashmiris.” Makhdoomi situated 1953 as the turning point, as it became increasingly clear that “Pandits were for India, and Muslims were for Pakistan.” Even the bastion of *kashmiriyat,* Sheikh Abdullah, wrote in his autobiography that “Kashmiri [Pandits] would use themselves as instruments of tyranny against the majority community…at various points of history, their political role has been dubious,” perhaps referring to a number of Kashmiri Pandits in Srinagar and in Delhi who were instrumental in his arrest. Almost all said that the differing ideologies did not get in the way of personal friendships with Pandits, however.[439]

Neerja Mattoo mentioned that some of the Hindus might have “resented” the land reform acts, given that much of the landed aristocracy was Hindu, but that her father and his associates, who were involved in the National Conference, were happy to give up their land. According to her, resentment started building as more accommodation was made for Kashmiri Muslims in the schools and government bureaucracy, a point I make in an earlier chapter. Zahid G. Muhammad described this as Kashmiri Pandits being “unable to reconcile to Kashmiri Muslims growing in society or accepting them as their equals.” The last straw was when protests arose after a Kashmiri Pandit girl married a Muslim in the late sixties. Right-wing Hindu parties in India tried to exploit the situation, and the Kashmiri state government jailed and beat up a number of Pandit protestors. This was one of the turning points in the relationship between the two communities.

[439] Interview with Author, Nighat Shafi Pandit; Interview with Author, Asmat Ashai, Maryland, 2 Dec. 2014.

When asked why the Pandits had left in the late 1980s and early 1990s, a number of my respondents looked uncomfortable. One looked away and said, "They didn't want to leave…but I can't say much." Makhdoomi only said that he "had heartache when they left." Another former bureaucrat said that the Pandits were made to leave by Jagmohan's government, who promised them that they would return once he had unleashed a brutal policy on Kashmiri Muslims.[440] A few mentioned that the atmosphere in the Valley had become such that Pandits did not feel they would be safe. Yet, it is on this topic where a number of respondents were silent, or did not respond at length. I suggest that this discomfort is registered as a result of feelings of both betrayal and guilt, and sadness at the state of of affairs between the two communities today. The guilt is perhaps an acknowledgment of the ways in which Islamist discourses were elevated during the militancy, as calls for *azadi*, or freedom, and a demand for *nizam-e-mustafa*, rang from the mosques. Perhaps my respondents were aware of how this might have contributed to Pandit fears about their survival in Kashmir in that period. At the same time, many also felt betrayed, feeling that the Pandits "just left us here, without letting us know…it seemed they didn't care what would happen to us under Jagmohan." Whatever they felt about the causes for the departure of the Pandits, most agreed that the present generation in Kashmir suffered a loss, as they had grown up without "knowing any Pandits."

My respondents affirmed that Kashmiri Pandits were an important part of Kashmir's history, and that on some level there was a shared culture between the two communities. At the same time, they spoke to the changes that occurred between the two communities once Kashmiri Muslims were seen as being empowered, a sentiment that was reflected in my chapter on educational policies. And so, my respondents affirmed the perception that the changes brought under Naya Kashmir led to increased tensions on the ground.

[440] Jagmohan was the controversial governor of the state during the crucial years of the militancy.

On Openings: Opportunity, Social Status and Mobility

While a number of the life narratives recalled a series of closures—in relation to the lack of political agency, loss of ties to the areas that became Pakistan, and tense relationships between Pandits and Muslims, they also spoke of the empowerment, in particular, of Kashmiri Muslims. The land reforms of the early 1950s, and an increase in educational and employment opportunities for Kashmiri Muslims under Bakshi precipitated an expansion of Kashmir's Muslim middle class. These policies enabled a much broader spectrum of Kashmiri Muslims to gain upward mobility. All of the life narratives spoke to how this was a time of opportunity—Muslims were being educated, employed, and travelling outside of Kashmir. While I addressed some of these openings in my education policy chapter, here, I will focus specifically on changing norms of *khandan* and increased mobility.

One of the primary changes that Naya Kashmir caused was intermingling between various social groups in Kashmir. *Khandani* and non-*khandani* students and employees mixed in schools and offices. Those previously affiliated with *peer* families, began to seek a more "practical" living in government service. In her autobiography, Shamla described how norms of *khandan* were slowly eroding, and the term itself was seen as objectionable as "day by day the feeling of equality was becoming stronger."[441] With the economic situation changing, people began to look for career and education for prospective marriages, instead of solely focusing on family background.[442] Ghulam Hassan Shah, for example, married into a non-*sayyid* family. While his uncles, who were not educated, protested the decision; his father stood by it given the family was still highly educated.

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[441] Shamla Mufti, *Chilman se Chaman*, 69.
[442] Interview with Author, Zahid G Muhammad.

Previously, areas outside of the Old City were rarely developed. Ehsan Fazili, a retired engineer who lives in Gogjibagh, recalled that some outlying areas housed old bungalows that belonged to non-Muslims who worked in the Dogra bureaucracy. Other parts of the city were associated with specific social mappings—Pandits, *khandani,* and non-*khandani* families. Under Bakshi, those in the bureaucracy were able to take out loans to build homes in neighborhoods that were specifically meant for government employees. Both *khandani* and non-*khandani* families populated these neighborhoods. Shamla explained how families started to move away from the Old City, populating areas in other parts of Srinagar, as the city itself grew in size. New residential areas emerged in Jawaharnagar, Gogjibagh, Barzalla, Rawalpura, Sanatnagar, Natipora, Bagh-i-Mehtab, and Peer Bagh. Today, these areas are still known for housing the bureaucratic classes. People began to "live in open and air-filled areas."[443] A number of interviewees stated that their living standards changed significantly, as incomes increased. Most of them also described how they were able to buy plots in these neighborhoods, moving out of the joint family system they were used to in the Old city. Families began to "bifurcate and trifurcate." Being a government servant was seen as a status marker, and a way out of prior cycles of poverty.[444]

Shamla spent the initial two decades of her married life in her in-laws home near Jamia Masjid, in a joint family of nearly fifteen people. Because of the lack of space at her in-laws home, Shamla, her husband, and their son, moved to a home they had built in Jawaharnagar in 1963, after obtaining a loan from the government. She viewed the transition to a nuclear family positively—not only did her family have more space, but she also felt freed from expectations at her in-laws. Her perception of the space of home began to change—it became less of an enclosed

[443] Shamla Mufti, *Chilman se Chaman,* 230.
[444] Interview with Author, Ehsan Fazili, Srinagar, 18 Aug. 2014.

space that was full of expectations and responsibilities and more of a space in which she finally began to feel comfortable and mentally free.

New forms of leisure, entertainment, and increased mobility emerged as an important theme in most life narratives, including Shamla's. In great detail, we hear about the various modes of transportation, cars and trains that were used. A number of times, Shamla also makes reference to how people, especially during weddings, would be outside of their homes late into the night. The bride would go from her house to the groom's house in the middle of the night. She stated, "it was a time of peace and security, no one was scared and no one was in fear."[445] Some of the bureaucrats would also go to clubs, including the Srinagar Club and the Amar Singh Club, mixing with other members of the same social class. Ehsan Fazili mentioned how most families would regularly attend the cinema, as well as festivals that were organized in parks. Cinemas like Palladium and Regal would play both English and Indian movies.

The emphasis on these new forms of leisure as well as "staying out late" is mediated by the realities of the present. During and after the militancy in Kashmir, staying out late into the night was unheard of because of safety concerns, for both men and women. Amidst a series of ongoing strikes and curfews, celebrations were muted, and functions ended early. In addition, the repeated mention of "cinemas" in that period is a grim reminder of the present: there are no cinemas that operate in Kashmir—most of them were converted into bunkers or army garrisons in the nineties. Various militant groups also proclaimed them "un-Islamic," while others have refused to allow cinemas to reopen, arguing that this would signal "normalcy" in Kashmir.

Before Partition, Shamla described how, aside from a few businessmen, very few Kashmiris would go outside of the state. If someone travelled, a whole host of arrangements would be made for them and they would have to receive permission, *rukhsat*, from all of their

[445] Shamla Mufti, *Chilman se Chaman*, 69.

relatives. As the internal borders within Kashmir along social status, education and mobility become more fluid, so too did mobility outside of Kashmir. As mentioned in the chapter on education, a number of Kashmiris—both men and women—left the state to study in other parts of the subcontinent, Europe and the United States. Shamla travelled to Aligarh for her Master's and some years later, her son Altaf, went to study medicine in the United Kingdom. Nearly all respondents mentioned their travels to Saudi Arabia for Hajj, as well as visits to family in the US, UK, and Malaysia. These trips "changed their outlooks" and opened their eyes to the world. These narratives of openings are important, and often get overlooked in the existing historiography of this period. They provide a perspective on the importance of Naya Kashmir and the state building project in these respondent's lives, shedding light on the multiple, sometimes contradictory, intersections of state-society relations in this period. As we see in the next section, state policies impacted gender relations, and brought Kashmiri Muslim women, in particular, into focus.

The New Woman: State-led Feminism in Naya Kashmir

The limited historiography on Naya Kashmir covers how it was a particularly liberating moment for Kashmir's women. Andrew Whitehead mentions the Women's Self Defense Corps of the National Conference in 1947 that received training against the invading tribal army from Pakistan.[446] Nyla Ali Khan notes how Begum Akbar Jahan, Sheikh Abdullah's wife, paved the way for the empowerment of women, stepping out of ascribed gender roles to create a presence for women in public life. As women broadened their horizons, Ali argues that they were "mobilized to avail themselves of educational opportunities to enhance their professional skills

[446] Andrew Whitehead, "The People's Militia."

and attempt to reform existing structures so as to accommodate more women.[447] She attributes the decline of this period of emancipation for women to the militancy, given that women's activism in Kashmir became reduced to "their identities as grieving mother, martyr's mother or rape victim." She also mourns this period as relegating civil society voices to the background, as well as clamping down on dissenting voices. Both Krishna Misri and Rita Manchanda, who have also written on the relationship between gender and the Kashmir conflict, concur with this assessment. For example, Manchanda argues that in the recent past, the pro-freedom groups have instrumentalized Kashmiri women, using them for their propaganda purposes.[448] Misri suggests that the "post independent era opened new vistas for emancipation and empowerment of Kashmir women," and that the "new political institutions and milieu encouraged them to look forward to a future as equal partners in reconstruction of a socio-economic matrix."[449] She continues that Kashmiri women became partners in the struggle to create better economic and educational opportunities for all, as well as greater political consciousness. As a result, they were able to step out of their usual familial caste and religious identities. The "changing landscape saw them making their own small choices and this was reflected in their dress, demeanor and deportment. [They broke] free from *purdah*…and…many donned a sari which didn't symbolize a particular identity then." She affirms that "women had come into their own…reconstituting themselves, they exhibited confidence to break the shells of stereotyped images and projected new images of modernity and professionalism."

In these analyses, the Kashmiri state pre-1980s had made significant progress in women's

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[447] Nyla Ali Khan, *The Life of a Kashmiri Woman: Dialectic of Resistance and Accomodation* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014) 126.
[448] Rita Manchanda, "Guns and Burqa: Women in the Kashmir Conflict," in R. Manchanda, ed., *Women, War and Peace in South Asia: Beyond Victimhood to Agency* (London: Sage, 2001).
[449] Krishna Misri, "Kashmiri Women Down the Ages: A Gender Perspective," *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies* 6/34, (2002) 3-27.

emancipation, as evidenced by increased economic and employment opportunities, a greater presence of women in public life, as well as the removal of the *burqa* or *purdah*. All three place blame on right-wing Islamist movements that emerged during the militancy as effectively curtailing this progress that was made.[450] Although Misri takes into account how patriarchy reconstitutes itself in male initiated processes of social change, she does not critically examine the state's project for Kashmiri women, placing the blame for the lack of women's emancipation entirely on these male-led movements. Far from being a feature of the post-militancy period, however, I contend that the life narratives showcase how the nature of Naya Kashmir's state-sponsored feminism in and of itself restricted the full potential of women's emancipatory projects. I show the ambiguities of the state project, highlighting the openings that were created for women in this time, but also how these openings were curtailed.

In the first half of her autobiography, Shamla lamented the position of Kashmiri Muslim women in the late Dogra period. Women had little financial independence and had to completely rely on their husbands. Their days were spent in cooking, washing, raising children, and sometimes spinning thread. Parents would worry about their daughter's marriage, and once a girl was married, she was beholden to her in-laws' wishes. *Khandani* women, especially, were restricted in terms of mobility and access to education. Although some girls from *khandani* families went to school, including Shamla and her sisters, this practice was generally considered unacceptable. Shamla narrated how her father received significant criticism from his friends and family for sending his daughters to school. In contrast to some of the reforms made for women's education in colonial North India, in Kashmir, education for girls was still perceived negatively. *Khandani* women were primarily restricted to domestic space. Shamla described that from her window she could see the activities of the *hanjis*, lower class families who lived in boats along

[450] Nyla Ali Khan, *Islam, Women and Violence*, 122.

the river. Unlike the women of Shamla's family, the *hanji* women would be seen walking outside, attending to menial labor. She wrote of the intimate social relations that developed amongst the women in the neighborhood, describing the proximity between the houses and how women would sit at the windows and talk for hours amongst themselves. This closeness enabled women to develop familiar social relations with each other. Yet, Shamla was ambivalent about this closeness, as it also created unwanted interference, gossip and idle chatter. Shamla attributed this to the constriction of mobility. "Women would remain in their own four walls," she described, "they were not aware that their land is like heaven."[451] She also bemoaned the fact that women were largely unaware of what was going on in Kashmir outside of their homes. With restricted mobility, *khandani* women were only able to go from their in-laws home, where they lived with their husband and his extended family, to their parent's home, usually with a guardian. On special occasions, they would visit the gardens with their families. Some of the elderly women would also visit the shrines of local Sufi saints or attend sermons held by religious leaders.[452] Yet, on the whole, women's activities in the public sphere were limited and they remained enclosed in domestic spaces.

However, Shamla's account is marked by women's changing roles in society, precipitated by state policy. Shamla recalled how women were increasingly able to challenge, overcome or negotiate existing gender norms in ways that allowed them to participate in the social and educational realm. Under Naya Kashmir policies, women's education and later, employment, became a primary target for intervention by the state government as it was committed to creating a citizenry that would be able to take part in the development of the region. The opening of schools and institutions for higher education for Kashmiri women

[451] Shamla Mufti, *Chilman se Chaman,* 17.
[452] Shamla Mufti, *Chilman se Chaman*, 16.

allowed for their active presence in the public sphere. In 1950, Sheikh Abdullah's government opened the first Women's College at Maulana Azad Road in Srinagar. Miss Mehmooda Shah, who was an active female member of the National Conference, was referenced in Shamla's autobiography, as well as a number of my respondents, as an important figure in the rise of women's education in Kashmir. As a lecturer, and later principal of the Women's College, she would personally visit Muslim families in the city and encourage them to send their daughters to college. In a study of Muslim women and education in Kashmir, Farida Abdullah Khan argues that in Kashmir, unlike in parts of North India:

> Colleges for women were set up by the state under a socialist program rather than by elite groups or philanthropic organizations with their own agenda for women's education. The goal was no longer to produce good mothers and dutiful wives, but partners in the development and progress of the region and its people, and the emergence of a new Kashmir.[453]

Given that women's empowerment was intrinsic to the development of a socialist, modernizing state, the vision for the "new woman" in Kashmir was linked to, but also separate from the "new woman" that emerged in social reform projects in India and Pakistan, which were centered more on grounding woman's spiritual/religious difference from that of her western counterpart.[454] As Reza Pirbhai argues for the case of Pakistan, the non-clerical male leadership affiliated with the Muslim league promoted an ideal for the "new woman" that was grounded in Islamic principles, promising the rights of inheritance, divorce and property, while also challenging customs like purdah and polygyny.[455] In Nehruvian India, Nirmala Banerjee argues that modernization failed to get rid of gender discrimination between men and women because instead of passing radical

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[453] Farida Abdulla Khan, "Other Communities, Other Histories: A Study of Muslim Women and Education in Kashmir, in Zoya Hasan, Ritu Menon (eds), *The Diversity of Muslim Women's Lives in India* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2005) 136.
[454] Partha Chatterjee, "Colonialism, Nationalism and Colonialized Women: The Contest in India," *American Ethnologist,* 16, 4, (1989) 622-633.
[455] M. Reza Pirbhai, "Pakistan and the Political Awakening of a Muslim 'New Woman' 1937-1947," *Hawwa: Journal of the Women of the Middle East and the Islamic World,* 12 (2014) 1-35.

economic measures, policies of the post-independent Indian state continued to "regard women as targets for household and motherhood-oriented welfare services."[456] She contends that "challenging the patriarchal ethos of society has never been the agenda of the Indian state." One important parallel between the Indian case and the Kashmiri case, is what Banerjee refers to as the women's movements' "exclusive dependence on the state," which "neglected mass mobilization and remained blind to subtle class and patriarchal barriers." The Kashmir case is still unique as there was no indigenous women's movement to speak of, even one that was dependent on the state; the state was the movement. Furthermore, the state had no interest in cultivating a "new *Muslim* woman" as in Pakistan, but rather, a "new *Kashmiri* woman" that could implement the state's socialist program for Kashmiri society. Thus, we can see the push towards women's empowerment as being implicated in postcolonial anxieties that were not simply a result of increasing attention towards women's empowerment but were inextricably linked to the ideologies of the new government.

Increased mobility was especially transformative. Women began to venture outside of their homes for school or work, often without their male guardians. Many started to become financially independent. Within a number of years, Shamla went from only being allowed to walk four streets away to a school where she taught to being able to travel to Aligarh for her Master's program. Middle class women finally emerged outside of the four walls of their home and for Shamla, this allowed them to broaden their horizons and gain confidence to challenge patriarchal norms within Kashmiri society.

After working as a teacher for some years, Shamla went on to receive her Bachelor's from the Women's College at Maulana Azad Road, much to the initial dismay of her in-laws and

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[456] Nirmala Banerjee, "Whatever Happened to the Dreams of Modernity: The Nehruvian Era and Woman's Position," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 33, 17, 1998.

family. Because of the lack of higher educational institutes for women until the establishment of the Women's College, there were very few Kashmiri women who had obtained adequate education to teach in schools and colleges. Shamla writes that most of the female teachers were from outside of Kashmir. The National Conference government, acknowledging this deficit, began to send Kashmiri women outside of the state to receive higher education, promising them teaching positions once they returned.[457] In 1953, Shamla, along with a select few other Kashmiri women left Kashmir for Aligarh Muslim University. Almost unheard of at the time, she left her ten year old son, Altaf, with his father and her in-laws in Srinagar. At Aligarh, she completed her master's degree in Farsi within two years and returned once again to Srinagar. Upon her return, Mufti was posted as a lecturer of Farsi at the Women's College. She was later shifted to serve as the principal at the Nawa Kadal College, a second women's college that was established in 1960 to serve the population of the girls in the Old City. She was at the Nawa Kadal College from 1966 to 1974. Finally, she returned to the Women's College, where she served as the principal from 1974 to 1982.

The founding of the Women's College marked a pivotal moment in Shamla's personal development as well as the development of women's education in the state. The government, she says, "wanted to create a new soul and new life for Kashmir's downtrodden girls."[458] She describes the college as a dynamic space—the young women were enthusiastic, disciplined and the environment was always bustling with activity. There was a strong emphasis on cultural programming in the College. The female students would become involved in debates, extracurricular sports and the arts and theater. As Mattoo, a Kashmiri Pandit, describes:

> The years from 1950 to the '70s were the kind of years when everything seemed within reach, anything possible with hard work and determination. The achievements of women

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457 Shamla Mufti, *Chilman se Chaman*, 116.
458 Shamla Mufti, *Chilman se Chaman*, 122.

> during these decades were so significant that they altered the gender landscape of schools, colleges, offices, courts, police stations, hospitals, hotels and business establishments. Women were everywhere, making their mark in every field. This revolution had been brought about surprisingly, without there being an organized women's movement in the state.[459]

Mattoo's reflection of the "surprising" nature of the developments for women without there being an organized women's movement in the state is important. As I will discuss below, however, the paternalistic attitude of the state creates its own limitations for women. Nonetheless, the shift in just a few years in societal perceptions of women's education and role in society is notable. At home too, Shamla realized that over time her in-laws also became more accepting of her educational endeavors.[460]

Through her description of the college atmosphere, we see Shamla ascribing a form of cosmopolitanism to the educational space. Indian dignitaries (including Prime Minister Indira Gandhi) would all come to the Women's College on their visits to Kashmir. There would be regular cultural programming in multiple languages that would be held for important guests. And yet, it was not just the space of the college that gave the female students more exposure to the outside world. The young women, for the first time, were able to travel to places within and even outside of Kashmir. The college would take the girls on field trips and camps. Shamla describes these visits in great detail, including the initial hesitation from families to permit their daughters to travel, the various modes of transportation, and the scheduled activities. The novelty of the mobility of that time period, especially for girls, gains particular relevance in the time period in which Shamla is writing. During the late 80s and early 90s, these trips were curtailed, and families were less willing to allow their daughters to venture afar given the prevalence of sexual violence in the region. Here we see, once again, how the realities of the

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[459] Neerja Mattoo, "The Story of a Women's College in Kashmir," in Urvashi Butalia (ed), *Speaking Peace: Women's Voices from Kashmir* (London: Zed Books, 2002) 164.
[460] Shamla Mufti, *Chilman se Chaman,* 129.

present shape what sort of memories emerge of the past.

Shamla discussed how the government soon realized that the school catered to a more elite and upwardly mobile class of females. Many families who lived in the Old City would not send their daughters to the Women's College. In seeking to uphold its socialist and egalitarian vision, the government established a separate Nawa Kadal College in 1961, catering to the population of the Old City. The Nawa Kadal College also held debates, plays and competitions, to which the girls and their mothers were invited. Shamla stated that the activities held at the College enabled the women in the Old City to think critically about the role of women in society and the importance of education for their daughters. Both the colleges were similar in their efforts to promote women's education in Kashmir. It is evident that this was a time of great improvement for those women who were able to attend these institutions, gain education and have greater mobility. It was also a moment in which the benefits of education were not just limited to a particular social class.

The state was able to utilize women's emancipation as a way to empower the Muslim middle class. As a number of scholars have noted, gender is intrinsically linked to class as particular class-based formations have defined ways of being "male" and "female."[461] For the state, the new Kashmiri woman, much like the new Kashmiri man, was educated, progressive and a secular nationalist. In many ways, the space of the Women's College reflected this gendered construction. The government was in charge of appointing its professors, lecturers and principals—ideally, those it saw as being politically loyal. The individuals involved with the Women's College, as well as a number of other institutions set up by the National Conference, exhibited a form of Kashmiri nationalism that was not opposed to increasing identification with the Indian state. They sought to foster a new generation of men and women who would bring

[461] Bannerjee, "Whatever Happened," 998.

Kashmir within the political, social and economic fold of the Indian state.

Despite the important shifts in increased opportunities for education and employment for women, our understanding of this time as bringing forth a new era of women's liberation must be tempered. It was certainly empowering for a group of women who were willing to ascribe to a particular type of Kashmiri nationalism, including those that were close to the leaders of the National Conference. Even then, their agency was effectively curtailed by the constraints of the paternalistic state apparatus. Those possibilities that were made open to them were still constructed by the state and were in service to state ideology, what Partha Chatterjee has referred to as the "new patriarchy" embedded in nationalist movements.[462] As mentioned earlier, any form of opposition, or alternative vision for Kashmir, was effectively curtailed. We see a subtle example of this in Shamla's autobiography in her description of her time at the Nawa Kadal College. This college was established for girls in the Old City in Srinagar, so that the Naya Kashmir ideology may also reach them. The politics surrounding the locality of the college, however, was different from the brand of nationalism found at the Women's College. Since a majority of the families that would send their daughters to this college were not members of the bureaucratic classes, the students at the college were significantly more critical of India and vocally sympathetic of pro-plebiscite groups such as the Awami Action Committee and the Plebiscite Front. Shamla narrated an incident in which the female students protested against official Indian presence in the school. In an effort to squash the tension, the Department of Education appointed Shamla to serve as the principal of the Nawa Kadal College. As a Kashmiri Muslim who was originally from that part of town, she was seen as a safe candidate for the position. Nonetheless, Shamla admits that the government had used her: while they appointed her as a principal, they still paid her as a lecturer. Her appointment was purely a political one.

[462] Chatterjee, "Colonialism, Nationalism, and Colonialized Women."

Here, we see the paternalistic attitude of the state—had they really cared about women's empowerment, Shamla would have received the salary that was due to her. This paternalistic attitude was experienced in the Women's College as well. Both Asmat and Nighat Ashai spoke of how they resented having to perform during cultural functions in front of Indian delegations, but they had no choice. Nighat recalled how Miss Mehmooda would make sure that the female students would attend college the day that important figures were visiting—including Indira Gandhi, who visited the college a number of times during these years. She remembered she had no interest in meeting her, but the punishment for not attending was severe. Neerja Mattoo also mentioned how pro-Pakistan sentiments were suppressed; she recalls in incident when the students were knitting sweaters for Indian soldiers. One girl "raised the slogan for Pakistan…and Miss Mehmooda slapped her."[463]

I suggest here that women's empowerment, while an important aim of Naya Kashmir, became embroiled in the political compulsions of the state; state sponsored-feminism had other goals in mind, including consolidating the power and legitimacy of the state. Thus, even while Shamla described the many openings that these women benefited from, we must understand them as being merely reflective, and not independent, of broader political developments under Bakshi. One of the shortcomings of this period of state-sponsored feminism is that no indigenous, grassroots women's movement emerged in Kashmir, given that those working on women's issues in Kashmir were exclusively dependent on the state. As a result, the mass mobilization of women's rights groups that emerged in a number of other postcolonial societies was relatively absent in the Kashmiri scene. This was to have important ramifications for women's movements in Kashmir in the later period. Because feminist projects were affiliated with the state, they became deeply contested and politicized. There was no independent

[463] Interview with Author, Neerja Mattoo, Srinagar, 24 May 2014.

grassroots women's movement that would take on issues impacting Kashmiri women, leaving ample opportunity for Islamist movements to dominate the agenda.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented life narratives—both oral and written—of Kashmiri Muslims that experienced Bakshi's rule, most of whom were directly impacted by his policies. Crucially, these narratives critiqued representations that either seek to see this period as one of linear progress or a sharp decline. Rather, the varying accounts were framed by speaking of particular openings –be it mobility or women's empowerment—but also of closures, including political suppression and relations with Kashmiri Pandits. Through these examples, I hope to demonstrate local Kashmiri men's and women's active involvement and agentive role in making sense of their world. They were not passive victims of the state; while these accounts certainly provide a sense of how the early postcolonial Kashmir state shaped Muslim identity, they also point to how a number of them made use of and benefited from institutional mechanisms in ways that made the most sense to them. As such, they were active participants in the making of Naya Kashmir, which allows us to have a more nuanced understanding of state-society relations and social and cultural change in this period.

What these life narratives most clearly elucidate, however, is the extent to which this class of Kashmiri Muslims contested the logic of the two nation-states, India and Pakistan. The overarching narratives of the Indian and Pakistani nation-state leave Kashmir, and Kashmiris, wanting. These life narratives allow us to envision a different collectivity, one that foregrounds a Kashmir-centric narrative that was formed through particular historical moments, such as the 1931 agitation and Sheikh Abdullah's arrest in 1953. Naya Kashmir, then, was about the social and cultural transformations happening on a local level. My respondents spoke both to the

openings it engendered as well as the closures. Yet, almost all concluded that the state building project failed to bring Kashmiris into the fold of the Government of India. This last point reflects one of the main contentions of this dissertation: Naya Kashmir cultivated an opposition from the very demographic it meant to integrate into the Indian Union. As we will see in the conclusion, this opposition was reflected in the Holy Relic Incident and the pro-plebiscite agitations after Bakshi's rule ended.

Conclusion

The End of an Era

After a decade in power, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed unceremoniously stepped down from power in 1963 under the auspices of the Kamraj Plan. The plan called for the resignation of senior ministers of the Indian National Congress so that they could devote their time to party work, in an effort to revitalize the national party that had suffered a series of recent electoral losses. Although Bakshi was not a member of the Congress, he offered his resignation alongside other state ministers. To his and many Kashmiris' surprise, Jawaharlal Nehru accepted his resignation, and Bakshi was made to resign. It appeared that the Government of India was becoming increasingly wary of Bakshi's leadership—as it had with the Sheikh's—and used the pretext of the Kamraj Plan to remove him from office. The reasons for this were not made explicitly clear. However, it appears that the level of corruption and political repression under Bakshi was of serious concern to the Indian leadership.[1] In addition, the Government of India was pushing to give Kashmir the same status as the other Indian states by converting the nomenclature of "Prime Minister" into "Chief Minister" and removing Kashmir's "special status" within the Indian union, which would entail an abrogation of Article 370. Bakshi was staunchly opposed to both moves, and so the utility of Khalid-i-Kashmir was no more.

After Bakshi stepped down from power, he selected his successor, Khwaja Shamsuddin, as the next head of state. The Holy Relic Incident occurred a few months into Shamsuddin's term in office, and took the state and national leadership by surprise. There were mass protests

[1] Sten Widmalm, *Kashmir in Comparative Perspective: Democracy and Violence Separatism in India* (London: Routledge, 2002) 40.

throughout the state and hundreds of thousands of people were on the streets, demanding a return of the relic. The protests soon turned against the local political establishment, and Bakshi and his family were accused of stealing the relic so that the resulting political outcry would force the Government of India to re-appoint Bakshi as head of state. Property owned by the family was damaged and set on fire. The Indian media, which had just a few years' prior written words of praise for Bakshi's government, wrote about the "harrowing tales of continuous repression which Kashmiris suffered."[2] The relic was recovered less than a month later under mysterious circumstances.[3] Shamsuddin, however, only lasted one hundred days in power, after which G.M. Sadiq, who was seen as more pliant to the Government of India, replaced him.

In the aftermath of the Holy Relic incident, Sadiq's government realized it needed a different tactic to manage dissent in the state. During the agitation, a number of oppositional groups within the state had gained traction, increasingly turning their attention to Kashmir's unresolved political status, and demanding a plebiscite in the state. In consultation with the Government of India, Sadiq decided to pursue a policy of political "liberalization". Political groups and newspapers of oppositional perspectives that had previously been banned were allowed to operate freely. As a result, a number of political parties emerged, and the number of newspapers with diverse perspectives increased. This created, in the perspective of the pro-plebiscite and pro-Pakistan groups a "political opportunity," where they were able to share their stance with the broader public.[4] The decade following Bakshi's rule subsequently paved the way for large-scale student and pro-plebiscite politics, underscoring the tenuous nature of his state building project. Students—both boys and girls—took to the streets, demanding that a plebiscite

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[2] Prem Nath Bazaz, *The Shape of Things in Kashmir.*
[3] See G.N. Gauhar, *Hazratbal: The Central Stage of Kashmiri Politics* (New Delhi: Virgo Publications, 1998).
[4] Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

be held in the state.[5] Some were vocally pro-Pakistan. Given the attempts the Bakshi government had made to ensure the educational institutions stay free of political activities and instead cultivate pro-Indian sentiments, these protests took the government by surprise. New parties such as the Awami Action Committee, a group of Muslim leaders and organizations that had formed during the Holy Relic Incident, and the Jamaat-i-Islam became more engaged in pro-plebiscite politics.[6] As explicitly socio-religious parties, they created a larger space for a religiously inflected discourse in the movement for self-determination.

Bakshi was tried and arrested under the Defense of India Rules for stirring agitation against Sadiq's government. He was released for health reasons, and in 1967, was elected to the Indian *Lok Sabha*, where he remained a member until 1971, and tried to play a bigger role in Indian politics. He died in July 1972, as one account narrates, "lonely and unpopular."[7] Unlike other political dynasties in Kashmir, Bakshi commanded that no one from his family should join politics, a wish they have fulfilled until today.[8]

Contradictory Trajectory of Naya Kashmir

This dissertation has examined the ongoing importance of the Naya Kashmir manifesto in Kashmir's early postcolonial period. I have argued that far from only being of relevance in the late Dogra period, the manifesto continued to play a role in the formation of the post-Partition state government's policies in the economic, educational and cultural realm. Furthermore, I have described the important role that Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad played in fostering social and economic change in this period. Through a close examination of the potentials and pitfalls of his

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[5] Zahid Ghulam Mohammed, *Srinagar: My City, My Dreamland* (Srinagar: Gulshan Publishers, 2011) 15.
[6] The Jamaat-I-Islam's primary role under Bakshi had been to establish a number of schools. It did not directly intervene in the political realm. It was only in the late 60s under Sadiq's liberalization policies that they began to consider a greater political role. See Gockhami, *Kashmir: Politics and Plebiscite,* 152-154.
[7] "Bakshi Number," *Sheeraza.*
[8] Syed Asma, "Lost Prime Minister," *Kashmir Life,* 21 Jul. 2014, To be accessed here: http://www.kashmirlife.net/lost-prime-minister-issue20-vol06-62396, Date of Access: 16 Aug. 2016.

government's economic, educational, and cultural policies, I have explored how the state had to negotiate multiple internal and external compulsions in the aftermath of Sheikh Abdullah's arrest, while still maintain a commitment to implement Naya Kashmir. Primarily, Bakshi's government wanted to appease *and* empower Kashmir's majority Muslim population, who it believed was central to providing legitimacy for its rule as well as securing Kashmir's accession with India. Thus, it was the backdrop of the lack of legitimacy—for both its rule and the accession—that influenced how Naya Kashmir would be implemented under his government. These two connected aims—to appease and empower—had conflicting results, and ultimately undermined the aims of Naya Kashmir.

On some level, the Kashmir state government was able to meet a number of aims of the Naya Kashmir manifesto. Through the government's patronage of individuals and institutions, it also provided Kashmiris with the prospect for social mobility, resulting in an emerging Muslim middle and professional class that was deeply reliant on the local state for educational and economic opportunities. The modernizing aims and discourses of the government also appealed to the local populace, who had previously been marginalized under the Dogras, and were eager for the change that the state building project brought about. In addition, the deployment of "Naya Kashmir" allowed Bakshi's government to render the issue of plebiscite obsolete in the international arena, and thus, displace the "political question" of Kashmir in this period.

At the same time, my analysis of Bakshi's government has shown how, in each arena of policy, the state struggled to navigate its multiple compulsions. The state utilized developmentalism to modernize Kashmir into a socialist haven of progress, as evidenced by shifts in agricultural, technical and industrial development. Yet, the projection of Kashmir as a modernizing, socialist haven was also used to manage local, India-level, and international

concerns about the new government. The need to "appease" also led to an economic policy that relied heavily on Indian aid, leading to greater levels of corruption and a dependence on central government funding. The government's educational policies attempted to create a modern, secular Kashmiri subject that would contribute to the nation-building project. This policy primarily benefited Kashmiri Muslims, who began to send their children to schools and institutions of higher learning. The empowering of Kashmiri Muslims in education created tensions with some Kashmiri Pandits, who argued that the state government was appeasing Muslims at their expense. In addition, some Muslim groups, including the Jamaat-i-Islam, opposed what they believed was an agenda to erase Kashmir's Muslim identity. Opposition from members of both communities led the state's secular credentials to be drawn into question. Through the government's cultural policies, a vast number of the cultural intelligentsia was folded into the patronage of the state, effectively leading to the end of "progressivism" in Kashmir. However, in their short stories, poems, and novels, many writers found ways to contest the state's ideology of "progress," highlighting the greed, corruption, and fear that had settled within Kashmiri society. Nonetheless, in its efforts to cultivate a Kashmiri cultural identity and heritage, I have suggested that the cultural policies of the state led to a heightened sense of uniqueness that was later deployed by pro-independence groups and individuals.[9] At the same time, this dissertation has also examined the variety of legal and extralegal mechanisms through which the state sought to enable integration and suppress dissent. My analysis of state repression and dissent has focused in particular on oppositional organizations that demanded a plebiscite in the state, and how they were suppressed or co-opted by the government. Despite being effectively neutralized, however, I have suggested that these groups paved the way for the

[9] This heightened sense of uniqueness did not necessarily apply to pro-Pakistan groups, which sought to leverage bonds of Islamic solidarity between Kashmiri Muslims and Pakistan.

popular mobilizations of the 1960s and 1970s. Notwithstanding the immense amount of work it undertook to consolidate Kashmir's political status, the sentiment of a majority of Kashmiri Muslims, even those that were participating in the bureaucratic state as evidenced by my oral interviews, remained at odds with the goal of Kashmir's greater integration with the Indian Union.

The Resonance of "Naya Kashmir" Today

In a graveyard in Naseem Bagh, near Srinagar's Hazratbal shrine, Jammu and Kashmir police guard the grave and mausoleum of Sheikh Abdullah. Despite championing the cause of Kashmiri self-determination for most of his life, in the 1990s, when an armed militancy against Indian rule erupted, police have been stationed around the clock at the Sheikh's grave. Young Kashmiri militants threatened to desecrate the Sheikh's grave, viewing him as a "sellout" to India after an accord with the Government of India in 1975.

Some miles away in a discreet graveyard in the Shah-i-Hamdan shrine in downtown Srinagar lies another grave, that of Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad, perhaps considered a greater "sellout" in popular memory. Yet, even during the tumultuous nineties, when anti-India sentiments were high, Bakshi's grave remained unguarded. Today, when asked, most Kashmiris do not even know where it is located. His legacy remains a contested one: even a political activist of the Political Conference, Pirzada Hafizullah Makhdoomi, a group that opposed his rule, declared that "For his own political gain, he sold Kashmir to India. But he also did a lot for…Kashmiri Muslims. He built schools, gave them jobs, built infrastructure."[10] It is in this simple sentiment expressed by Makhdoomi that we are able to see the continued importance and relevance of Naya Kashmir—in its time and today.

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[10] Interview with Author, Pirzada Hafizullah Makhdoomi, Srinagar, Nov. 17, 2013.

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